The FBI's Forgotten Past; May Day Demonstrations; Viet Vets; Nixon's Integration Plot; Civil War in Ceylon; Inside L.A. /75c

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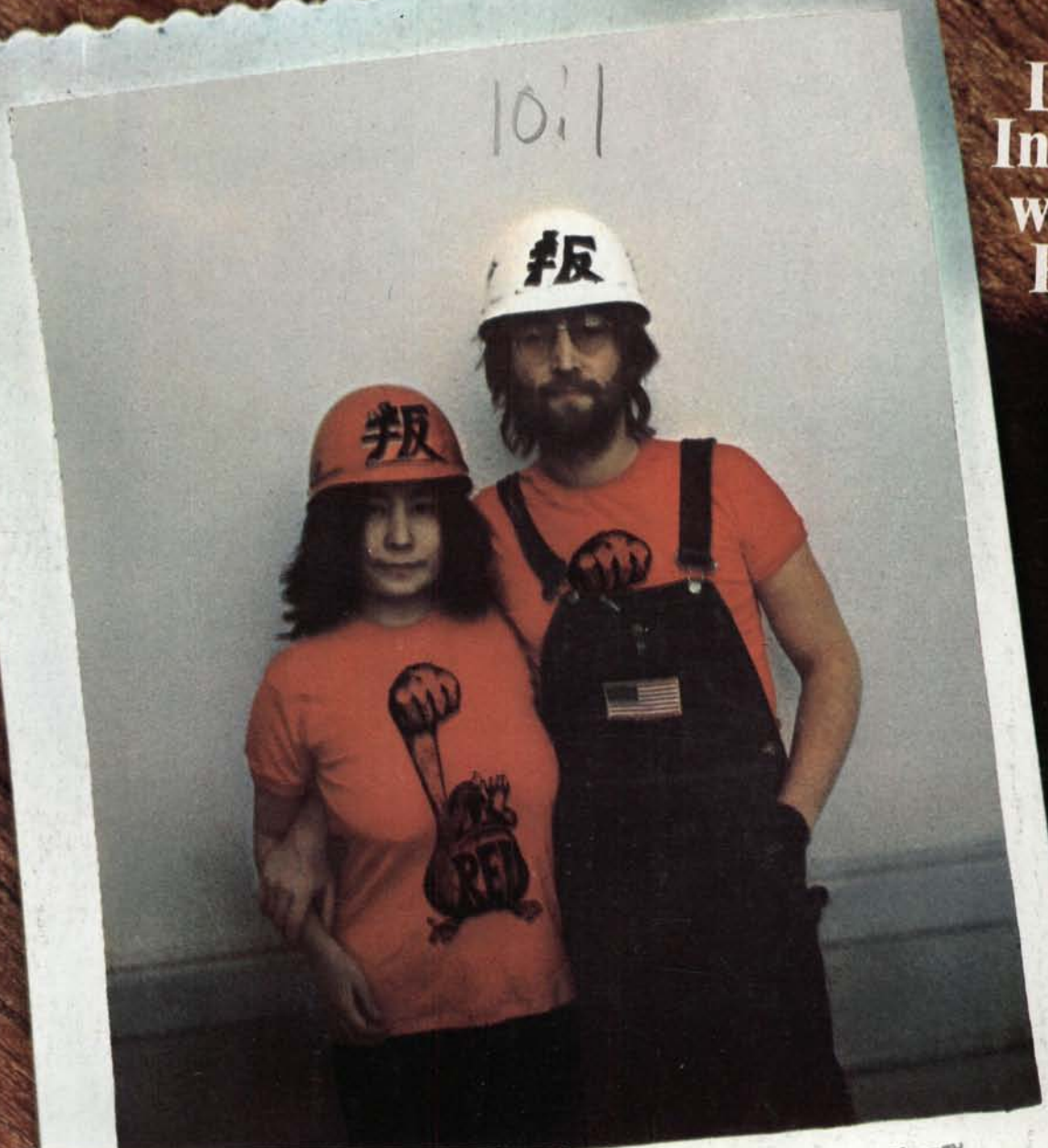
Inside Lennon: Interview with the Radical Beatle



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66764 ELTON JOHN
Tumbleweed Connection
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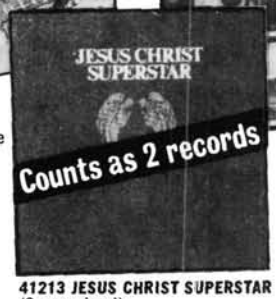

41213 JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR
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Decca LP, 8TR, CASS

33184 DIONNE WARWICK
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66826 BOBBY SHERMAN *Portrait of Bobby*
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68023 WOODSTOCK TWO
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75002 JACKSON 5
Maybe Tomorrow
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21597 RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Scheherazade
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33182 SUSAN SINGS
SESAME STREET SONGS
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39089 5th DIMENSION
Greatest Hits
SouCi LP, 8TR, CASS

37833 ROD McKUEN
In The Beginning
Sunse LP, 8TR

44765 SHIRLEY BASSEY *Is Really Something*
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41217 BERT KAEMPFERT *Orange Colored Sky*
Decca LP, 8TR, CASS

38368 VENTURES 10th Anniversary Album
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43871 STATLER BROS
Bed of Roses
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS

21551 BEETHOVEN
Piano Sonatas
Yorks LP, 8TR, CASS

30618 DIANA ROSS
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS

37838 FLIP WILSON
Flipped Out
Sunse LP, 8TR

21633 RED ARMY ENSEMBLE
Yorks LP, 8TR, CASS

42988 ROGER WILLIAMS Love Story
Kapp LP, 8TR, CASS

42986 ROGER WILLIAMS *Golden Hits*
Vol. II
Kapp LP, 8TR, CASS

48800 B. B. KING Live
At Cook County Jail
ABC LP, 8TR, CASS

38373 IKE & TINA TURNER
Workin' Together
Liber LP, 8TR, CASS

68030 CROSBY STILLS NASH & YOUNG
Four Way Street
(2 record set)
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS

42665 CROSBY STILLS & NASH
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS

43870 MELBA MOORE
Look What You're Doing
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS

33099 PDQ BACH
Stoned Guest
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS

50506 BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE
Wanna Be A Ballerina
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS

32882 JOAN BAEZ
Joan Baez 5
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS

68019 EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER
Cotil LP, 8TR, CASS

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Bach at the Fillmore
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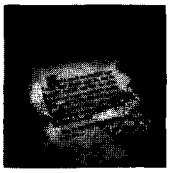
65793 BREWER & SHIPLEY Tarkio **KamSu** LP, 8TR, CASS

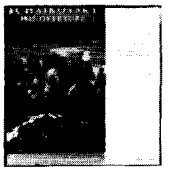
38376 CANNED HEAT 'N JOHN LEE HOOKER (2 record set) **Liber** LP

42784 STEPHEN STILLS **Atlan** LP, 8TR, CASS



66709 ORSON WELLES Begatting of the President **Media** LP

65784 MELANIE Leftover Wine **Budda** LP, 8TR, CASS



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41152 WHO Tommy (2 record set) **Decca** LP,8TR, CASS

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28082 GREGORIAN CHANT TREASURY **Yorks** LP, 8TR, CASS

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[*Page 18*] May Day

[*Page 30*] Coroner's Report

[*Page 10*] Viet Vets

Herein:

Hard Times:
The Enemy Within: The FBI's Forgotten Past 4

Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army 10
by Art Goldberg

May Day: Anatomy of the Movement 18
by Michael P. Lerner

Civil War in Ceylon 26
by Tamara Deutscher

Inside Los Angeles: The Coroner's Report 30
by Maxwell Boas

Battle for the South: Phase Two 36
by Charles Fulwood

Lennon: The Working-Class Hero Turns Red 43
Interview by Robin Blackburn and Tariq Ali

Letters 50

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Vol. 10, No. 1 JULY 1971

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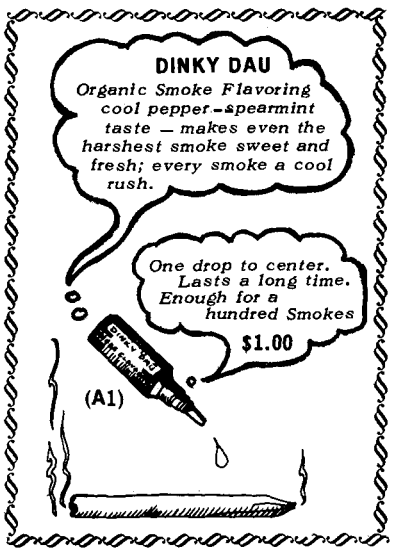
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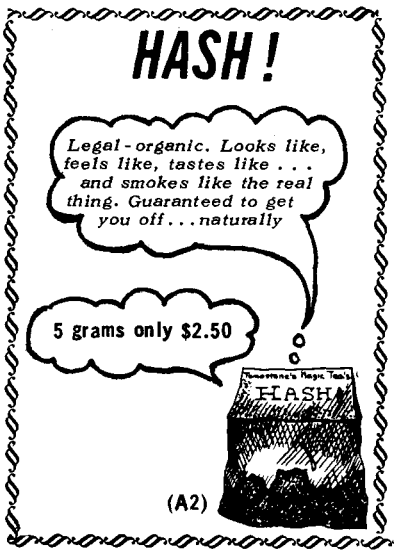
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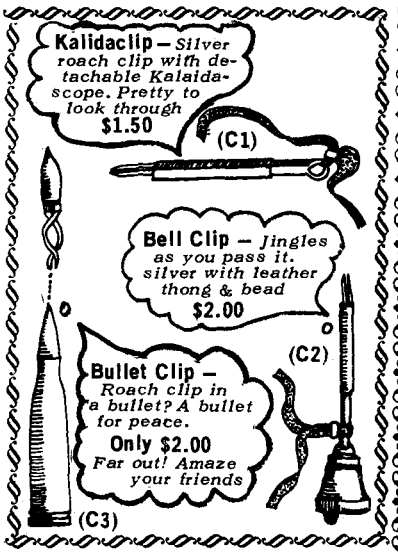
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Hard Times

The Enemy Within: The FBI's Forgotten Past

"Deportation hearings and the shipment of the 'Reds' from this country will be pushed rapidly," Hoover declared.

(The current activities of the FBI are not the result of J. Edgar Hoover's senility. Never an independent, objective police operation as the lore suggests, the Bureau has functioned as a secret political police agency from its earliest days. In this context, it is instructive to read The Federal Bureau of Investigation *by Max Lowenthal, published in 1950 by William Sloane Associates. This review article is based on the book.—J.R.)*

ATTORNEY General Charles J. Bonaparte (a grandnephew of Napoleon I) requested that Congress create a Bureau of Investigation in 1907; but Congress, fearing the growth of a secret police, refused. Walter I. Smith, member of the House appropriations committee, issued a typical warning: "No general system of spying upon and espionage of the people, such as has prevailed in Russia, in France under the Empire and at one time in Ireland, should be allowed to grow up."

At the time, both the Treasury and Post Office maintained their own police—as did the armed forces. In an effort to curb the growth of the Treasury police, Congress passed a law prohibiting further loan of its secret police officers to the Justice Department and other agencies. Bonaparte waited until July 1908, when Congress adjourned, and then went ahead and created a Bureau of Investigation by administrative action (the name was changed to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935). He later defended the move, calling the new police force an "innovation," and when the Attorney General was attacked in Congress, President Theodore Roosevelt attacked Congress for being soft on criminals.

FROM THE BEGINNING the Bureau's growth was tied to shrewd bureaucratic maneuvering and warm association with members of the appropriations committees. The Bureau first gained power by taking over enforcement of the Mann Act, which banned interstate commerce in prostitution. In asking for funds Chief Stanley Finch said, "Unless a girl was actually confined in a room and guarded, there was no girl, regardless of her station in life, who was altogether safe."

Money in hand, Finch prepared a plan of action foreshadowing FBI tactics of later years. Lowenthal writes, "In each city where vice was found, a Department of Justice detective hired a local lawyer. The two then went to the local city police station and asked for one of the city detectives to help them. All three then went to each of the places to be investigated, and there made a census of its residents. The census was facilitated by detailed advance planning in Washington. One detail of the plan instructed the Federal detectives to ask every local police department for an order requiring the heads of the places under inquiry to cooperate with the national government." Thus every G-man in a city or town could inspect the employees of the houses and know them on sight. In addition, the Bureau hired as informers madams who were jealous of other madams. Finally, the Bureau assisted the local police in enforcing local laws by giving them information collected in the census. After constructing a census file, Finch devised a dragnet system to apprehend criminals. After meticulous planning, Bureau agents would swoop down on a city, first arresting everyone in a given area, later sifting out the criminals. Most of those arrested were innocent of any crime. The central file and the dragnet, first employed in prosecuting under the Mann Act, became the Bureau's stock in trade.

The Mann Act was loosely written, and soon the Bureau was not only hunting down those who transported women for illicit purposes in interstate commerce, but also arresting persons crossing state lines for non-commercial purposes of immorality. Jack Johnson, the heavyweight champion, was arrested crossing state lines with a former prostitute whom he had persuaded to become his girl friend. Johnson was sentenced to prison. In 1938, looking back on the era, J. Edgar Hoover explained that Congress meant to attack business transactions, but actually struck at private immorality as well. The Mann Act as interpreted by the Bureau provided a great deal of business: As Hoover complained, "In many instances the victims consent."

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During the First World War, the Bureau was given the job of catching draft dodgers, and in so doing created a scandal. From April to September, 1918, the Bureau set up dragnets throughout the country, leading to what the newspapers called "a carnival of arrests." As many as 30,000 men were taken in during a single day in New York. At Atlantic City, for instance, long motorized columns were hidden outside the city, and then at the appointed hour they roared into town and up to the piers. Special agents jumped out, arresting all men in sight. They hauled men with lather on their faces from barber shops, took in cripples and men of 75. Commuters about to board trains were arrested. The detectives would then hold court, demanding that each man prove his age and draft status either by producing a birth certificate or a registration card. If neither was available, then the men were shipped off to army camps, where the military didn't know what to do with them. While the detectives reported they were amazed "at the number of plain cases of slackerism," it turned out that of every 200 men arrested, 199 had to be let go.

Soon after the draft raids, it was revealed that the Bureau had become active in cataloguing political opinions and affiliations of various citizens. A. Mitchell Palmer, destined to become Attorney General, accused Senator Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania of receiving political support from brewers, and thereupon becoming a mouthpiece for the anti-prohibition campaign. At the same time, Palmer said the brewers were pro-German and unpatriotic. At an ensuing congressional investigation, A. Bruce Bielaski, wartime chief of the Bureau, revealed that the detectives had put together a catalogue of pro-German persons which, as it turned out, included various members of the U.S. Senate, as well as William Jennings Bryan, William Randolph Hearst and others who had belonged to Socialist clubs during their youth.

After the war, Chief Bielaski called attention to the new dangers from peacetime radicalism. Senators raised questions about the loyalty of the Nonpartisan League, which among other things supported the League of Nations. The congressional committee which had looked into pro-German persons now wanted to investigate the new radicals. But its mandate was too confining. Archibald E. Stevenson, a New York lawyer who worked within the Bureau investigating opinions and associations of various citizens, suggested a way out. He told the committee of the wide range of pro-Germanism within the nation. He said people who agitated for Irish independence were pro-German, and he explained, "German socialism . . . is the father of the Bolsheviki movement in Russia, and consequently the radical movement which we have in this country today has its origin in Germany."

The committee agreed to investigate, and Stevenson began to describe radicalism: Radicals, he said, supported the League of Nations. The Nonpartisan League favored self-determination of nations, and believed in an unfettered press. He attacked the "heathen" Socialists and their Sunday schools. Socialists, the IWW, syndicalists—all were under close surveillance by the Bureau. It was known that these seemingly disparate groups were all "merging in the development of Bolshevism." Radicals believed in free love, and had wives "in rotation," in imitation of the Russians. Surprisingly, many radicals were native American born, and they clustered around universities. Educated and cultured women entertained these radicals. Radicals had infiltrated the Wilson Administration. Radicals had infiltrated the labor unions.

Stevenson said there were large numbers of dangerous foreign-born persons in industrial centers, and proposed that "the foreign agitators should be deported." The immigration laws should be made more stringent so as not to "dilute Americanism any further." The committee chairman asked him, "Would it not do to pass a law that no person should enter this country unless he is a white man—and Anglo Saxon—for the next ten years?"

The Bureau representative replied, "If it could be done I think it would be a good thing." Stevenson added, "The bars should be put up to exclude seditious literature. . . . American citizens who advocate revolution should be punished under a law drawn for that purpose." Stevenson had promised he wouldn't name names, but he could not restrain himself, and the names of radicals began to pour forth; they were reported in the Congressional Record.

The bombings of 1919 added fuel to the Bureau's anti-radical work. In 1919 an anti-radical division was organized within the Bureau under J. Edgar Hoover. (It later was changed to the General Intelligence Division.) Activities of the new division were described in a report to Congress which tells of the Hoover division's work against the bombers, and includes the story of Andrea Salsedo. Salsedo, an Italian immigrant printer, was brought to the Bureau's New York Park Row office as a suspect in the bombings. He agreed to be "held" there, and stayed eight weeks. Hoover insisted Salsedo stayed at Park Row by his "own choice." The object of his incarceration was to get Salsedo to furnish clues about the bombings. The G-men pointed out to Salsedo that he was probably in violation of state law for printing views the detectives thought were subversive. They also told Salsedo that the Labor Department would deport him. None of this was meant as a threat, the Hoover division reported; rather, "the situation was explained" to Salsedo. After eight weeks in the room, the Hoover report says, "Salsedo put an end to his part of the arrangement by jumping from the fourteenth floor of the Park Row building upon the street, committing suicide."

The Bureau then asked for more money to help solve the bombings, and it revealed that the "wild fellows" in the radical movement were set to rise up and destroy the government "in one fell swoop." Pressed for details as to when this would happen, Bureau spokesmen became evasive. Finally, however, they announced that they had uncovered a plot to assassinate high government officials. Here again, details were vague. No one was assassinated. Hoover's division never captured the bombers.

In October 1918, before the end of World War I, Congress enacted a sedition law providing for deportation of aliens who held objectionable views on economic and political matters. Although administra-

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tion of the law was placed in the hands of the Labor Department, Hoover's GID wanted to use the new law to press its fight against radicals. After behind-the-scene negotiations, Hoover's division won control, and plans were laid for mass arrests—the so-called "Palmer Raids," named after Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. The raids were carried out against alleged members of the Union of Russian Workers in November 1919, and against alleged Communists in January 1920. In all, some 10,000 persons were detained.

The GID began by placing undercover men in suspect organizations; some of them rose to leadership positions within the groups. The raids were planned at night, when suspects would be at home, hopefully in bed. The undercover operatives were directed to persuade their organizations to hold meetings on the designated nights, so as to make it easy for the Bureau. Hoover himself directed operations from a command post in Washington. The Bureau told agents to phone in long distance ". . . to Mr. Hoover any matters of vital importance or interest which may arise during the course of the arrests." The raids, carried forward in a dragnet, brought in many thousands of working men, high school girls, men who happened to be eating at suspected restaurants, and people chatting with one another on street corners. Former U.S. Attorney Francis Fisher Kane later described the thousands arrested as "not dangerous people . . . they were the sort of stuff of which we make good citizens. . . . The great majority of them were workingmen, some men doing well, many of them with families here, with ties that would have kept them."

Although the law required the Bureau to take out warrants before arrests, in many instances it did not do so. A study showed that in two-thirds of 10,000 arrests no warrant was ever issued. The Bureau ordered agents to search "meeting places and residences of the members." Headquarters in Washington advised agents it was left "entirely to your discretion as to the method by which you should gain access to such place. If, due to the local conditions of your territory, you find that it is absolutely necessary for you to obtain a search warrant for such premises, you should communicate with the local authorities a few hours before the time for the arrest is set and require a warrant to search the premises." The Bureau was accused of mistreating prisoners, beating them, and packing them into small cells.

Following arrests the G-men were told to speedily persuade the radicals to admit to seditious political views, and find out their alien status in order that they might be deported. In secret correspondence Hoover had urged the Immigration Bureau to refuse to free any prisoner on bail unless he answered the questions put to him by Bureau detectives. Hoover explained, it "virtually defeats the ends of justice" if detectives could not get the prisoners to provide evidence on which they could be deported. Hoover believed it was dangerous to let the prisoners have a lawyer present, or let them talk to a lawyer before they submitted to an examination by G-men. A committee of 12 lawyers who later reported on the Palmer raids said, "It has been the practice of the Department of Justice and its agents . . . to question the accused person and to force admission from him by terrorism."

Lowenthal writes, "A total of about 10,000 persons was arrested by the GID, most for guilt by association. About two-thirds of these were released by the agency after preliminary sifting. Of the remaining 3500, [most] were released by the Department of Labor. The net result . . . was the deportation of some 700 men and women, most of whom were declared guilty by reason of affiliation or association with alleged subversive organizations."

DEPORTATION was a cruel business. A woman who had been arrested while attending a dance given by the Union of Russian Workers was ordered deported, leaving behind several small children, including a baby, because they were American born. The American Women's Committee came to her defense and the order was set aside.

The GID arranged for some deportations aboard the *SS Buford*—nicknamed the "Soviet Ark"—an army ship commandeered for the purpose by Hoover. Some of the people on board had wives and children in the U.S. who were not told of the deportation until after the ship had sailed. The GID explained, "The arrangements concerning the sailing of the *Buford* were necessarily kept quiet and secret, due to the fact that it was well known that the radicals, while on the surface desirous of returning to Russia, were not sincere in this proclaimed view."

Hoover was in charge of the arrangements for the *Buford*, and he invited members of the House Immigration Committee to be on hand for the sailing. They came to New York, and Hoover took them among the deportees so that the members could examine the men and women and question them.

After the *Buford* sailed, Hoover announced that more "arks" would follow. According to a report, Hoover declared, "Deportation hearings and the shipment of the 'Reds' from this country will be pushed rapidly. Second, third and as many other 'Soviet arks' as may be necessary will be made ready as convictions proceed, and actual deportations will not wait for the conclusion of all the cases."

By December 1920, the GID reported its raids had brought about the "cessation of revolutionary activities in the United States." But three months later, in March 1921, the Attorney General appeared before appropriations committees and, while full of praise for the detectives, warned that more money was necessary as the radicals had begun to reorganize themselves. In 1924, Bureau chief William J. Burns, former head of the private detective agency, told Congress, "Radicalism is becoming stronger every day in this country. . . . We have absolute proof of all this: we have documentary proof showing that it is absolutely true. . . . I dare say that unless the country becomes thoroughly aroused concerning the danger of this radical element in this country we will have a very serious situation." Undercover men of the Bureau reported that radicals had set up schools all over the country "where they are teaching children from four to five years old." The radicals had joined labor unions, and during the coal miners' strike in 1922 the Bureau was organized on a war footing under Hoover. Agents infiltrated the strikers and attempted to arouse them to armed insurrection. The Bureau sought to show that the strike was

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financed by the Third International, but there was nothing to support this conclusion.

THE BUREAU'S expansionist phase was curbed from an unexpected quarter. In the post-war period the Bureau was accused by members of Congress of failing to investigate and prosecute those guilty of fraud in the sale of war materiel to the government. At a hearing of a special Senate committee which investigated the role played by the Justice Department, former agent H. L. Scaife told of his inquiries into fraudulent airplane contracts:

Mr. Scaife: ". . . when we began to dig up these audits it was apparent it was going to be blocked. . . ."

Senator Jones (Washington): "Tell us the facts showing the obstruction."

Mr. Scaife: ". . . When we got about just as far as I have detailed it to you I had instructions to begin a bread investigation."

Mr. Chamberlain: "An investigation of what?"

Mr. Scaife: "Of bread—food. . . . I had already dug up cases with audits complete, showing where the government had been defrauded to the amount of $25 million at that time. And I got instructions to go ahead with the bread investigation. I paid absolutely no attention to those instructions."

Senator Jones: "Who gave you those instructions?"

Mr. Scaife: "I think it was Mr. Hoover of Mr. Burns's office."

Senators and congressmen who pushed investigation into the Department of Justice were then placed under surveillance by the Bureau. When a woman employee was summoned before the special investigating committee and asked to testify or face contempt, Hoover summarily demanded her resignation. A former agent told how he was instructed to investigate Senator LaFollette, who himself had been urging an investigation of Teapot Dome scandals. Detectives were assigned to find out everything about LaFollette, so, in the words of one of them, "he could be stopped in what he was doing."

A former Bureau agent described the methods employed to the investigating committee: "Oh, search his—find out all the mail that comes in, all the papers, anything that he has got lying around. Find out in his home. Just like you would take—the same principle that you pursue, Senator, when you make a criminal investigation. There is a servant working in this house. If she is a colored servant, go and get a colored detective woman to take her out; have this colored detective woman to entertain her, find out the exact plan of the house, everything they discuss at the table, the family, write it down, make a report. And any information you find that is—report what you find . . . and then if it is damaging, why of course it is used. If it is fine, why you cannot use it. It does no damage. . . . And the next question was to find out what he had up in his office. . . . I had people—people went to his office and went through it."

Senator Ashurst of the special investigating committee summarized what had been discovered: "Illegal plots, counterplots, espionage, decoys, dictographs, thousand dollar bills, and the exploring of senators' offices come and go in the pages of this testimony; and these devices, these plots, counterplots, spies, thousand dollar bills, and ubiquitous detectives were not employed . . . to detect and prosecute crime, but were frequently employed to shield profiteers, bribe takers and favorites. The spying upon senators, the attempts to intimidate them . . . are disclosed by this record."

Senator Wheeler of Montana led much of the investigation of the Justice Department, and the Bureau sought to build a case against him for representing clients in private matters coming before the executive department. But the senator was exonerated by a committee of senators, and was acquitted at the trial. Kenneth Crawford wrote at the time that Hoover had played an active part in the affair.

Harlan F. Stone, the new attorney general, ordered the FBI to stop spying, telephone snooping and undercover work. Amid mounting criticism, Hoover was made director of the Bureau in 1924.

IN 1939, when Hoover reactivated the GID, Mary R. Beard, the historian, charged that the FBI was becoming a threat to the American system. She recalled Hoover's part in the Palmer raids. At the time, Alexander Holtzoff, a Justice Department attorney and close friend of Hoover, wrote Ms. Beard: "Mr. J. Edgar Hoover was not in charge of, and had nothing to do with, the manner in which the arrests were made of the so-called radicals under the administration of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Mr. Hoover at that time was not connected with the Federal Bureau of Investigation but was a special assistant to the Attorney General. His function was . . . limited to the handling of legal matters and the preparation of evidence for presentation to the proper authorities in connection with those activities."

In another letter Holtzoff wrote to Ms. Beard: "The mere fact that he was connected with the Department of Justice at the time is of no consequence. . . . There are many officials . . . who were here when Mr. Palmer was Attorney General, and . . . who served in the Daugherty era. Surely you would not visit on them the sins of Mr. Palmer and Mr. Daugherty. In a big organization such as the Department of Justice the various members of its personnel cannot be held morally responsible for actions of other officers or employees. Each one is responsible for what he does himself. Neither is there any moral responsibility on the part of a member of a big organization to resign . . . merely because he disagrees or disapproves of some of the actions of his associates."

Although the FBI's own files, made public by Attorney General Homer Cummings, said the GID was organized under the direct administration of Hoover and that Hoover had been "since 1917 in charge of counter-radical activities as a special assistant to the Attorney General," Hoover himself denied any connection to the Palmer raids. In the foreword to a picture book of FBI history, published in 1947, Hoover said, "I had no responsibility" for the raids. The same year he answered a question about the Palmer raids in the New York Herald Tribune, saying, "I deplored the manner in which the raids were executed then, and my position has remained unchanged." —JAMES RIDGEWAY

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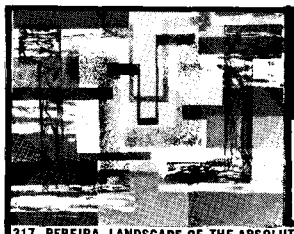

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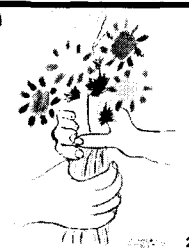

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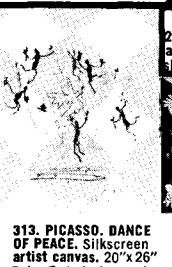

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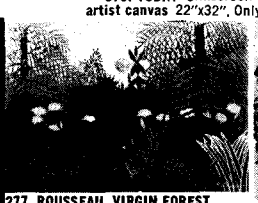

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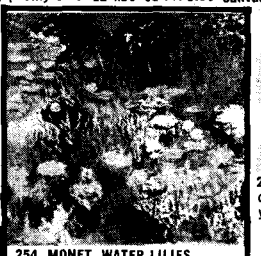

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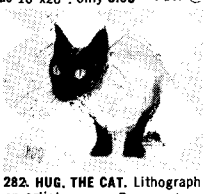

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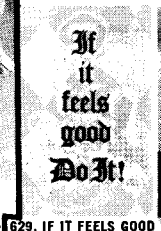

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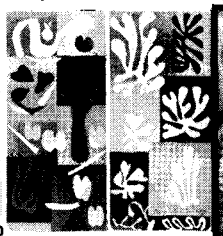

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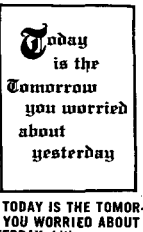

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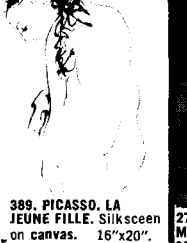

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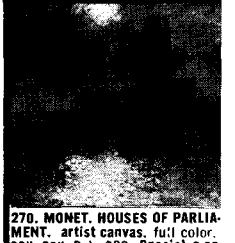

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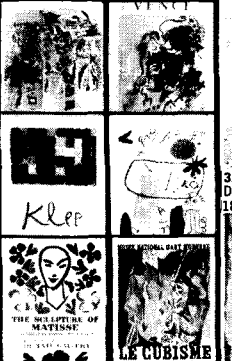

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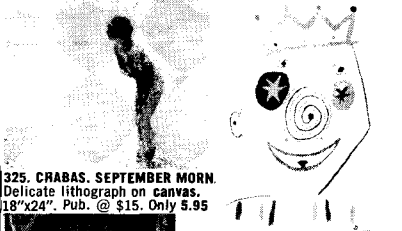

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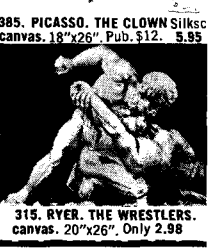

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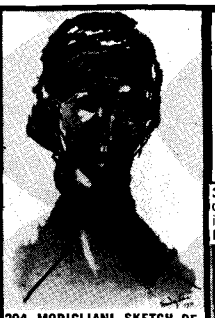

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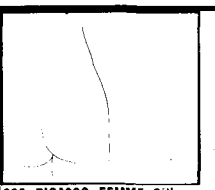

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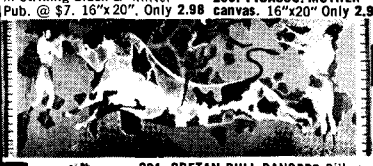

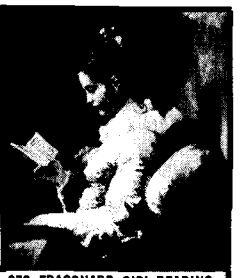

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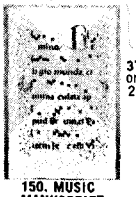

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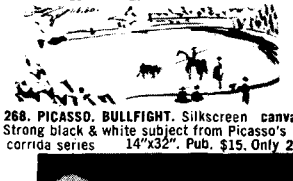

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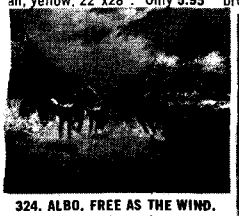

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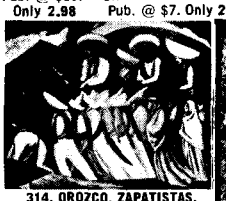

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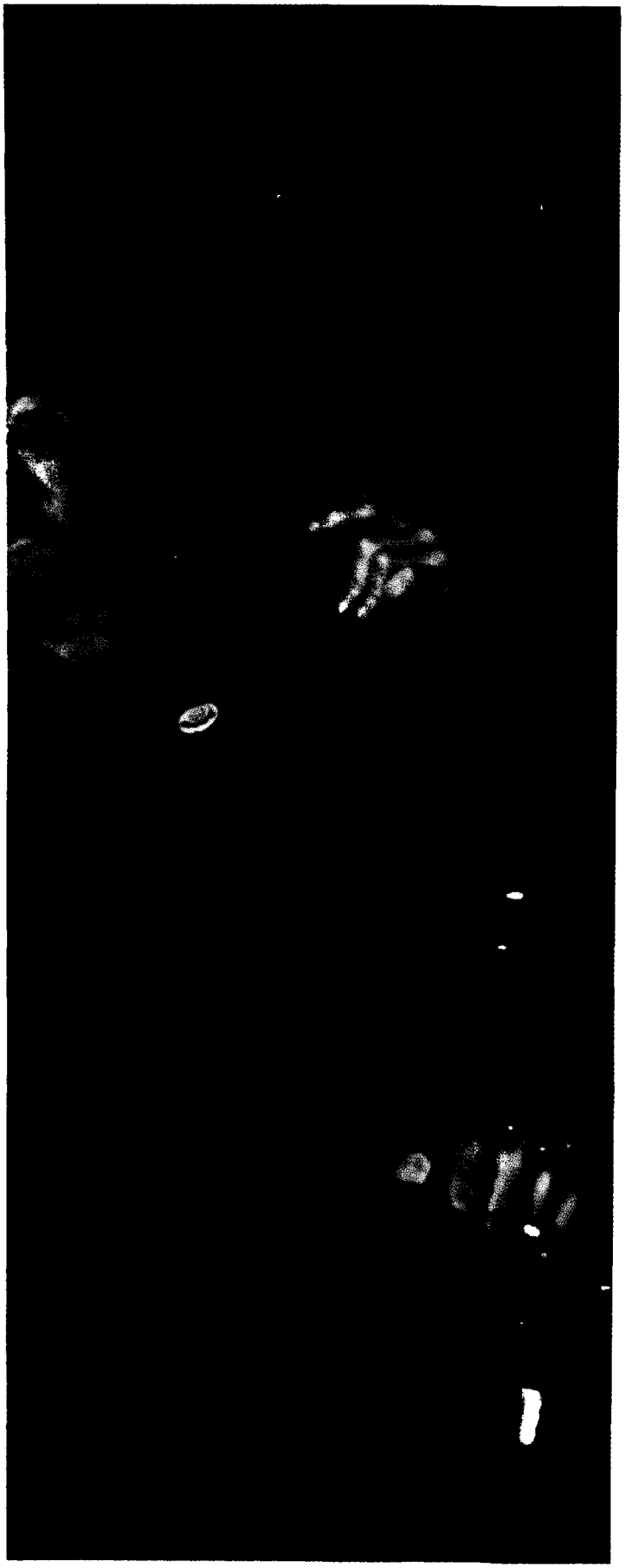

Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army

A SQUAD OF SOLDIERS moved through the park adjoining the U.S. Capitol. They were grubby-looking troopers, clad in jungle fatigues and "boonie hats" with the wide brims turned up. Jumping a low fence, they began shouting at a group of tourists. "All right. Hold it. Hold it. Nobody move. Nobody move." Their voices were full of tension and anger. A man broke out of the crowd and started running. Several soldiers fired at once, and the man fell, clutching his stomach. Blood could be seen on the clean sidewalk. The tourists turned away in horror. "Get a body count," a soldier yelled.

Another squad of soldiers emerged from under the Capitol steps. "All right. ID. ID," they screeched. "You got no ID and you VC." They quickly grabbed a young woman and led her away, binding her wrists behind her back and prodding her with their rifles. Then they grabbed a young man and began shouting, "VC. VC." A tough-looking trooper from the first squad nervously fingered his M-16. "Whaddya mean? All these gooks are VC. Let's get 'em all." They grabbed the young man and threw him on the ground, tying his hands behind his back. Several of the soldiers kicked him, seeming to aim for his groin.

Then someone took out a long, thick hunting knife and

by Art Goldberg

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lifted up the man's shirt, holding the knife to his bare stomach, and pushed against it slightly. "You VC? You VC?" The man said nothing. He was pushed to his feet and shoved to the ground again. Then he was told to get up. This time the knife was pushed against the side of his neck, and the same question was repeated. Still no answer. The man was dragged away. The soldiers could be seen tying him to a tree. There was more screaming and shouting. A few more civilians were pushed around. Then the soldiers left, and a smaller, less angry group of men dressed in khaki fatigues passed out leaflets to the astonished tourists.

"A U.S. Infantry platoon just passed through here!" the pink colored piece of paper read in big bold letters. "If you had been Vietnamese . . .

"We might have burned your house

"We might have shot your dog

"We might have shot you . . .

"We might have bombed out bridges you use every day

"We might have raped your wife and daughters

"We might have turned you over to your government for torture

"We might have taken souvenirs from your property

"We might have shot things up a bit . . .

"We might have done *all* these things to you and your neighbors.

"If it doesn't bother you that American soldiers do these things every day to the Vietnamese simply because they are gooks, then picture YOURSELF as one of the silent victims.

"HELP US END THE WAR BEFORE THEY TURN YOUR SON INTO A BUTCHER OR A CORPSE."

The leaflet was signed: "Vietnam Veterans Against the War."

By this time, of course, the tourists knew that the guerrilla theater scene which had nearly scared the shit out of them a few minutes before was just a part of the "demonstrations." The Vietnam vets had been in town for two days by then, and they were hot news in the papers and on TV. It would have been impossible for even the most addle-brained tourist not to know who they were or what they were doing in Washington.

[END IT NOW! END IT NOW!]

"ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR . . . We don't want your fucking war," the vets chanted on their first day in Washington. They were marching back from Arlington National Cemetery, angry that they had been turned away at the gates and prevented from holding a memorial service there. "One, two, three, four. We don't want your fucking war," they chanted again, raising clenched fists with extended middle finger towards a helicopter passing quickly overhead. They didn't know it at the time, but one of the passengers in the helicopter was Richard Nixon. In calling their members to Washington, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War had written:

"The President watched football on TV during the last peace march, and America accepted his indifference to students and 'peaceniks.' We know he will notice Vietnam Veterans when they surround the Capitol. They are the men who fought, the men the President praised and decorated. He'll have to notice. It would be disastrous to do otherwise."

The vets were right. Richard Nixon could not ignore them. They wouldn't let him. First they camped out on the Capitol mall without even asking for a permit. Then they marched on Arlington. Later they swept through the halls of Congress, buttonholing their elected representatives and demanding action. They didn't come as respectable citizens politely asking for an end to the war. They demanded it. When New York's Bella Abzug and California's Pete McCloskey said at a rally that they would work to terminate the war by the end of 1971, many of them booed and shouted, "End it now. End it now." Their grubby jungle fatigues and long hair and beards couldn't have endeared them to their congressmen, especially the more conservative ones. Yet it was difficult, even for the hawks, even for Nixon, to write off a group of Vietnam vets, most of them wearing numerous decorations and many bearing evidence of multiple wounds, as just another bunch of crazies.

So the veterans got to see a lot of congressmen and senators who would normally treat anti-war groups like lepers. Yet the exchange of views was frequently frustrating, for politicians are well experienced at keeping themselves isolated from reality. Upstate New York Democratic Congressman Samuel Stratton, for example, had a powerful technique. Agreeing to see a delegation of his constituents, he proceeded to tell them about Vietnam, keeping up a nonstop talk and rationalization, until one of the vets finally screamed: "Will you please shut up, Sam, and listen?" Stratton stopped for a minute, and then began talking again. He was still talking as the last vet walked out the door.

Some congressmen suddenly discovered urgent business to take them back home. Congressman John Rooney of Brooklyn had perhaps the slyest technique. Asking each vet where he lived, Rooney looked up the address on a map of his district. One vet lived right on the district boundary line. "I'm sorry," said Rooney, "I can't talk to you. The lines have changed. You don't live in my district anymore." Rooney tried to gerrymander as many vets as he could out of his office, but finally there were a few he could not avoid. "I'm going to shoot straight from the shoulder with you guys," Rooney said. "I know where you stand, and you know where I stand. We're on opposite sides." Rooney wasn't interested in what they had to say.

For the liberals, the vets' visit was almost as painful. They were forced to explain why the legislative process takes so long. "Then what you're telling me," said one veteran to Republican Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts, "is that your system can't deliver. Seventy-five percent of the American people want the war ended now, and you say there is a lag of seven to eight months."

Representative Clement Zablocki, a Wisconsin Democrat, agreed one day to let some veterans testify before his Foreign Affairs subcommittee; but the next day, apparently because of pressures from within the committee, he was forced to cancel the hearings. Later in the week, another liberal senator was patiently telling the vets how slowly the legislative and executive process works. "You notice how quickly the government moved right up to the Supreme Court with that injunction, didn't you?" he was asked. "How long did it take to pass the Tonkin Gulf Resolution?" The senator had no answer.

Photograph by Richard Balagur

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THERE WAS SOME BITTER IRONY to the name the vets gave their encampment: "Dewey Canyon III—A Limited Incursion into the Country of Congress." The official military code name for the invasion of Laos was Dewey Canyon II. Before that, there had been, in 1969, a Dewey Canyon I, a secret "incursion" several miles into Laos, that had never been made public.

Recalling Tom Paine's words about the "summer soldiers and sunshine patriots" who left their revolutionary army during the disastrous winter at Valley Forge, the Vietnam vets saw themselves as "winter soldiers." "The Vietnam Veterans Against the War, the winter soldiers of today, will not give up the struggle," said the call to Dewey Canyon III. "We will fight on, continuing the effort to bring an immediate end to the war in Indochina, a revamping of veterans' benefits and hospital care, and a restructuring of priorities that will make this nation what our forefathers intended it to be."

What the veterans seemed to want most, on an individual level, was a chance to talk to as many people as possible about what they had seen and, in many cases, what they had done. Many wanted to testify at official congressional hearings. It was as if a great dual-edged collective guilt had settled over them. They seemed compelled to relate the horrors of war; by testifying, they might somehow be relieved of the burden of guilt so many of them obviously carried. Many who had been wounded spoke of the atrocities committed upon the Vietnamese before they spoke of their own wounds. None seemed bitter towards the Vietnamese for their wounds. Their bitterness was directed towards the American government. At one point, several went to the Pentagon to turn themselves in as war criminals. Finally, a brigadier general explained that the Pentagon was not "the appropriate place" to turn themselves in. When asked where the appropriate place was, he had no answer.

The Vietnam Veterans had originally planned to confront the Supreme Court of the United States on Wednesday, April 21, the third day of their encampment. Their purpose was to picket the building for three hours to present the demand to the court that it rule on the constitutionality of the war. Thanks to Attorney General John Mitchell, the veterans found themselves battling the federal courts much sooner than they expected. On the Friday before the encampment was to begin, the Justice Department raced into federal court to get an order from Judge George L. Hart prohibiting the Vietnam vets from camping on the mall. They could stay on the land, Hart ruled, but they couldn't build fires, couldn't put up tents, except for a medical station, and most of all, they must not sleep there. It was all right to sit, or even lie down on the ground, but there was to be no sleeping or the vets would be in contempt of court.

On Monday the Vietnam vets, represented by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, moved into federal court, and got the lower court order reversed. Not to be outdone, on Tuesday the Justice Department took an appeal to Chief Justice Warren Burger, who also functions as circuit justice for the District of Columbia. Burger, agreeing that the camp would "set a precedent for further demonstrations," reinvoked Hart's order. Unable to get the full Supreme Court to overturn Burger's ruling, Clark then negotiated with the Justice Department to allow the vets to stay if they promised not to sleep on the mall. The department agreed, and late Wednesday afternoon some 25 members of Congress, led by Don Edwards and Ron Dellums of California and Shirley Chisholm and Bella Abzug of New York, offered their offices as sleeping quarters for the vets. The plan was for half the men to sleep in the offices or at the National Cathedral, and half to stay awake on the mall.

MOST VETS APPEARED TO support the plan at a meeting on the mall, when a long-haired bearded young man representing the California delegation angrily jumped up to the stage to offer a counterproposal. Stay, he argued, and defy the court order. If a bust came the vets should resist arrest, but go to jail nonviolently, their hands on their heads like prisoners of war.

A large part of the crowd seemed to favor the new proposal, so a vote was called for. The group broke down into regional delegations so that non-vets could be weeded out. Nearly two hours passed before all the votes came in, and by the time John Kerry, a member of the VVAW executive committee, began reading the votes, darkness had fallen. Quickly the scene began to resemble a political convention as Kerry, who has dabbled in electoral politics, his face bleached out by the TV camera lights, read off the votes.

"New Mexico votes 7 to sleep [on the mall] and 25 to stay awake." (Groans) "Wisconsin votes 33 to sleep." (Cheers) "Virginia votes 49 to stay awake. Maryland votes 44 to sleep and 1 to stay awake." The voting was close and the delegations were often divided among themselves. The final vote was 480 to 400 in favor of staying, but it was agreed that the vote was not binding on any individual who didn't want to remain.

Early in the evening a slight drizzle began, but the vets remained. The next day the Washington Daily News bannered "Vets Overrule Supreme Court." That Thursday, the Justice Department crept back into federal district court and asked Judge Hart to vacate the order he had issued less than a week before. At about the same time, a group of 200 vets, apparently trying to rub it in, sat in at the Supreme Court building, blocking the main entrance. Many of them had their faces marked with the letters "POW" in red ink. After several hours, they were arrested by the Washington police, going off with their hands behind their heads, as they had said they would.

On Friday morning, April 23, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War gathered at the west steps of the Capitol for their final symbolic act of separation from the government they considered less legitimate with each passing day. One by one, about 800 men walked up to a wire fence erected the day before to keep the April 24 anti-war march off the steps. There they threw their medals towards the statue of the first Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, John Marshall. It took two hours for all the men to throw down the Bronze Stars, Silver Stars, Purple Hearts and campaign ribbons they had been awarded in Vietnam. First in line was a 27-year-old former Marine sergeant from West Hartford, Connecticut, Jack Smith, who said:

"We now strip ourselves of the medals of courage and

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heroism . . . those citations for gallantry and exemplary service. . . . We cast these away as symbols of shame, dishonor, and inhumanity. Our tale is one of a Vietnamese people whose hearts were broken, not won. Our commanders were not concerned with lives, but with body counts. Our testimony gives definition to words like genocide, racism and atrocity." One by one the vets stepped up to the microphone, made a statement and threw their medals over the fence. Some also threw away the toy M-16 rifles they had been carrying all week.

One vet summed up what all the others had probably been feeling when he said: "I feel like I'm clean, that I'm completely cleansed."

Later that afternoon, the vets gathered in a corner of the mall to plant a tree. Jan Crumb, one of the founders of VVAW, threw the first shovelsful of dirt back over the roots and said: "The Vietnam veterans who have defoliated so much of Vietnam are now planting the tree of life. All power to the people." The crowd then sang John Lennon's "All Power to the People" and Dewey Canyon III was officially over. But the vets didn't all leave town. The next day, in the otherwise spiritless April 24 march, they were the only people chanting. It was a chant that had been heard before, but not from Vietnam veterans. "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, the NLF is gonna win."

["NOBODY TELLS THE PEOPLE WHAT'S GOING ON"]

"AT A MINIMUM," SAID Jan Crumb, "we showed that the Supreme Court, the executive branch and the Congress are irrelevant. By defying the Supreme Court, we showed that the entire structure of the government is irrelevant. Our next move will be to show that the state and local governments are also irrelevant."

Crumb was understandably jubilant. It was the final hour of Dewey Canyon III, and things had gone even better than he had expected. As one of the founders of Vietnam Veterans Against the War and a member of its executive committee, he was also one of the key organizers of the Capitol encampment. His face was all smiles underneath the khaki "boonie hat" he was wearing, although the wide brim covered so much of his thin face that his horn-rimmed glasses and wispy beard seemed to be his most prominent features.

In 1965, Jan Crumb was a West Pointer. He had been appointed to the military academy after serving as a radio crewman aboard a fixed-wing aircraft that supplied Special Forces troops all over Vietnam. At that time, the Special Forces units were only "advisors," but Crumb saw enough of the military situation there to give him grave doubts about the war. He is careful to point out that he never used his gun while in Vietnam. Nevertheless, he took the opportunity to go to West Point, but when the Tonkin Gulf Resolution passed Congress, he resigned his commission.

On April 15, 1967, Crumb attended the massive Spring Mobilization in New York City. Someone was holding a sign in the staging area that read, "Vietnam Veterans Against the War." He walked over and found about 20 other Vietnam vets ready to march with the banner. After the march, six of them got together and formed the organization, first using a desk and a single phone in the office of New York's Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade Committee. The organization grew slowly at first, but more rapidly in recent years. It now has about 11,000 members and 26 regional coordinators. The membership is expected to increase significantly as a result of the Washington action.

"This has been a real educational experience for a lot of our guys," Crumb said. "Some of them actually thought the war would end after we had been here a few days. They expected to be ushered into the offices of congressmen and senators. They thought that Congress would be grateful to them. Well, they learned where Congress and the Supreme Court are really at."

The vets' leadership knew that they would not be allowed into Arlington Cemetery when they first went out there. Many of the marchers were enraged, and wanted to scale or tear down the fences surrounding the cemetery. "We felt that the point of the march was not to tear down the fence, but to show the world what the U.S. government was doing. The same thing was true with the Supreme Court. I don't think it was necessary for those guys to get arrested for sitting-in there. That was just a John Wayne type of thing. They wanted to prove that they were 'radicals,' or Movement heroes, and they couldn't do that without being busted at least once. We've got to break out of those roles.

"The important thing was that we stood up and defied the Supreme Court, and nothing happened to us."

Jan said that there were a good number of politically sophisticated vets at the encampment also, but that many of them had a hard time working in the Movement as a whole. "Most of our boys will not buy anything that sounds like a line. They bought the military line once, so they do a lot more thinking before they buy anybody else's line. Most of our guys have learned from the Vietnamese that revolution starts in the head, and that violence only comes when there is an attempt to put the revolution down.

"Anybody who has had face-to-face dealings with the NLF knows that they never use violence unless it is absolutely necessary. They engage in firefights only in self-defense. A large part of their organization operates quietly on the political level. A lot of the street kids who were helping us out thought that we would fight for that piece of land [the mall] like it was the Alamo. We just didn't believe it was worth that. That's why we advised the guys to accept the deal Ramsey Clark worked out with the Justice Department. We felt it was important to be able to stay here until Friday and do all the things we came down here to do."

Crumb also believes that the Vietnam vets have broken new ground for the anti-war movement. "We came down here and ignored most Movement traditions," he said. "We were neither trashers, passive marchers, nor the usual non-violent civil disobedience types. We followed our own instincts and did things our own way. There was a great deal of humor and a great deal of seriousness about what we did. Nobody has ever come down here and run around through Congress in old grubby clothing, waving toy guns, the way we did, nor have people dared say what we've said. Of course it's easier for us, but our approach has won us a great deal of support."

The biggest effect the vets had, Crumb believes, was on the local Washington, D.C., community. "You wouldn't believe the people who have come down here this past week to

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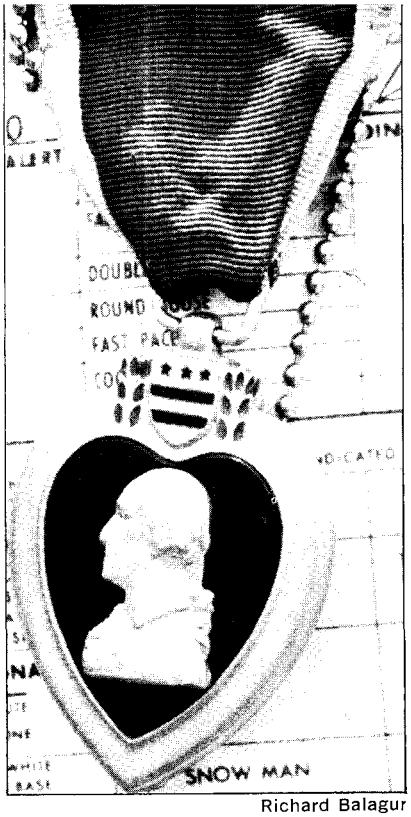

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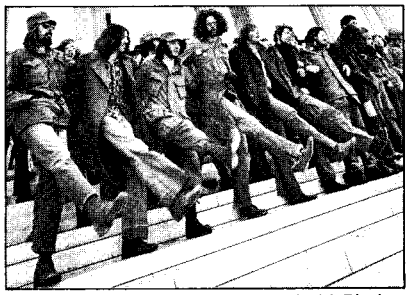

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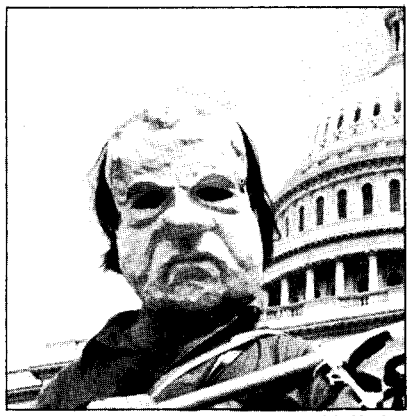

Wide World Photos

offer us support, give us money, blankets and food. There have been steelworkers, hardhats, government workers, State Department employees, and even off-duty cops. They were trying to identify with us, trying to understand what we were thinking. One guy, a middle-aged black man, actually broke down and cried. 'Why are you doing this?' he kept asking, 'Why are you doing this? I know it must be important or else you wouldn't be here.' He just couldn't understand. Nobody really tells the people what's going on. They've been brainwashed."

["WE CAN'T BUY FRIENDS THROUGH MILITARY AID"]

FORREST LINDLEY IS 23 years old, but despite the well-fitting jungle fatigues, the red beret, and the chest full of medals, he looks no older than 18. On the steps of the Capitol, talking with a group of high school students, he speaks with the earnestness of a college sophomore whose ideas rush out faster than he can express them. Despite the neatly combed, longish straight hair that falls from beneath the beret, he seems almost the

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stereotype of the clean-cut All-American youth that was so common a generation ago. Approaching him later at the encampment on the mall, one is astounded to see captain's bars on the collar of his jungle fatigues, in addition to the airborne wings sewn above his medals.

Lindley enlisted in the Army in October 1966 after graduating from Upper Arlington High School in Columbus, Ohio. He says that when he enlisted he wasn't against the war and he wasn't for it. He wanted to go to Vietnam to find out about it for himself, partly because he didn't have much faith in what he had been told about it. He quickly acquired the military background that most career officers hunger for. After basic training, he went to officers' candidate school at Fort Benning, Georgia, then took airborne jump training there. His next stop was the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he received Special Forces and Ranger training. After that, he attended the Defense Language Institute at Fort Bliss, Texas, where he learned Vietnamese. In August of 1968 he arrived in Vietnam, where he was assigned as an advisor to a Vietnamese Airborne Unit operating in Tay Ninh province. He remained in Vietnam for more than 18 months, returning to the U.S. in March of 1970. He was discharged in August 1970 with the rank of captain.

Now Lindley attends college in Colorado, and although he is clearly not yet a radical his program for ending the war is very similar to the one that has been proposed by the NLF and North Vietnamese delegations in Paris. The plan is simple, and parallels the People's Peace Treaty which Vietnamese and American students agreed to last December. First, the United States must set a date for total and complete withdrawal. He believes that December 31, 1971, is a good and reasonable date for such a withdrawal to be completed. The setting of the date should be followed by internationally supervised elections, and the release of prisoners by both sides.

His reasons for being against the war are simple. Having lived with South Vietnamese ARVN soldiers for 18 months, and speaking Vietnamese, he concludes, "I don't believe the Vietnamese people want to fight and die for the Ky-Thieu government. They basically want to be left alone." He sees no hope in the Nixon policy of Vietnamization. "Vietnamization will only lead to a continuation of the fighting." He supports the setting up of a coalition government followed by elections, another point both Vietnamese delegations in Paris have pushed. He sees little point in any election that would be held by the Ky-Thieu government. "Marshal Ky has already said many times that if he doesn't like the way the elections come out he will stage a coup, so what's the use?"

Unlike many government officials, Lindley is not worried about the outcome of an election. "If the NLF wins the elections, then that's the decision of the people of Vietnam. In the future, I think we're going to be more careful about what the people of a nation want, rather than what their government wants. I also don't think we can buy friends through military 'aid.' "

The turning point in Forrest Lindley's attitude towards the war came when he realized that both the Vietnamese ARVN soldiers and the American GIs were dying for something they didn't believe in, namely the Ky-Thieu government. He noticed that the ARVN soldiers he was working with were hardly interested in fighting, but that local villagers were willing to fight to defend their homes and families.

Since his discharge last August, Lindley has spoken to a lot of people in the Midwest and in Colorado about the war. He has spoken to clubs and fraternal organizations. He thinks that people there want the U.S. to get out of Vietnam. Like most of the veterans who came to Dewey Canyon III, he was very anxious to talk about his experiences and communicate what he had seen and done. He claims not to be interested in the "social revolution" being pushed by radical groups in the U.S. He says that he supports many of the individual demands but not the Movement as a whole. He is against the tactics of groups like the Weathermen, and was even doubtful about the use of nonviolent civil disobedience during the May Day demonstrations. "We [the Vietnam Veterans] attracted support from many people who had not opposed the war before."

["WE'RE TAUGHT TO KILL PEOPLE"]

"THE NORTH VIETNAMESE and the VC, they're really good fighters," Cruz Sonabria said with admiration. "They really feel in their hearts what they are fighting for." Then, as if to prove the point, he added, "I got shot by a North Vietnamese, you know. He was real young, only about 16 or 17. I guess he could have killed me." As he spoke, his face seemed to reflect more compassion for the young North Vietnamese who had severely wounded his left arm than for his own condition which has kept him shuttling in and out of hospitals since he was hit in May of 1969. He neglects to mention that he was only 18 at the time.

Sonabria, who is Puerto Rican, was living in East Harlem with his mother when he enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1968 at the age of 17. "When I first went in," he recalls, "I was really gung-ho. I was all for the war. I was right-wing and conservative." He arrived in Vietnam as a combat infantryman in March 1969 and was assigned to the Third Battalion of the Third Marine Division, operating near the DMZ. On May 21, 1969, his company was on a sweep only a few hundred yards from the DMZ when the point man, who walks ahead of the company, got shot. "After that, nobody wanted to walk point," Sonabria said. "Morale was very low, and I just got disgusted and volunteered to do it." A few minutes later, he himself was shot, his arm riddled with AK-47 bullets.

He was evacuated to a hospital in Quang Tri, and then to another in DaNang. Ten days later he arrived in the U.S., but by that time his left arm had become infected, and he eventually developed osteomyelitis, an inflammation of the bone. It was after being hospitalized in the U.S. that Sonabria began to find his attitudes towards the war changing. From talking to other wounded vets, seeing pictures they had taken, listening to their stories—of ears and nails being cut off dead bodies so they could be brought home as trophies—and reflecting on his own Marine combat training, he began to see what had been happening in Vietnam.

"It all goes back to the way we are trained. We are taught to kill people who don't look like us, and who don't think

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like us." Sonabria has found that his fellow Vietnam vets from the South understand that the same kind of thinking that let them regard blacks as subhumans also allowed them to see Vietnamese as subhuman. "Yeah, the white brothers from the South are beginning to understand that, you know. They've been telling us how that old way of thinking has got to go."

In May 1970, almost a year after he was wounded, Cruz Sonabria was still in the hospital. He was a patient at the Manhattan VA hospital when the Cambodian invasion took place. The invasion, plus what he considered the generally poor treatment returning GIs get from the VA, led him to take his first steps as an activist. He began circulating a petition among the other disabled vets for better treatment. The hospital authorities didn't like the idea of the petition circulating, and tried to crack down on the men. Al Hubbard, the executive director of Vietnam Vets Against the War, heard about the protest at the hospital, which is located only a few blocks from the VVAW national office. He contacted Sonabria and the other protestors, arranged for publicity for them, and helped improve conditions at the hospital. "I've been with the organization ever since then," Sonabria explained.

Last September he participated in the vets' march from Morristown, New Jersey, to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in which the group used dramatic guerrilla theater action to try and bring the horrors of the war home to the small insulated towns on the route. Like most of the other veterans, Sonabria felt that Dewey Canyon III had been tremendously effective. "People can't ignore what we have to say. After all, we've been there."

Going from Vietnam back to East Harlem ("It was like moving out of one war and into another"), Sonabria is perhaps more concerned with social issues than some of the other vets who participated in Dewey Canyon III. "I've got a lot of friends, Vietnam vets, in East Harlem who are hooked on dope. I think it comes from the war, the nervousness. Anyone who has been in Vietnam can't say that they weren't scared. You sit there and you never know whether a mortar or a rocket round is going to come in on you. Life is horrible over there. You don't get enough food, you don't get enough rest, and you go from mountain to mountain with a 60-pound pack on your back."

Sonabria said he supports those people who are demonstrating against racism and poverty, like SCLC and the National Welfare Rights Organization. "If money is not provided for our people to live on," he said earnestly, "and if all our technology is not put into solving the decay of our cities, and the problems of hunger and racism, and people feel strongly about them, then they've got to demonstrate. We felt strongly about our cause, so we defied the Supreme Court and stayed right here on the mall. Our cities are decaying. We can't wait." Sonabria has moved downtown, out of East Harlem, both for his own peace of mind and to be closer to the VA hospital and the school he is attending while he prepares to enter college in the fall.

"Are you going to turn those medals in tomorrow?" I asked him. He looked down at the Purple Heart, the Vietnamese campaign ribbons and the combat medal, ran his hand through his long black hair which almost reached his shoulders, and said with finality, "Damn straight."

["WE HAD NO BUSINESS OVER THERE"]

"How would you feel if you had men die in your arms all the time? After a year of that, wouldn't you be against all kinds of war, and all kinds of violence?"

Dennis Barden of Houston, Texas, was a crew chief (sergeant) on a Huey helicopter attached to the 101st Airborne Division. He was in Vietnam for over a year between 1966 and 1967 flying all kinds of missions. The son of a naval officer, he admits to being gung-ho when he entered the army. He had heard he was getting an induction notice, so he enlisted first. "I wanted to do something. I wanted to fight for the independence of South Vietnam. I soon came to the conclusion that maybe the South Vietnamese government had invited us in, but the people sure didn't. We had no business over there in the first place. It's just politics."

Barden, who, like most of the Vietnam vets encamped on the Capitol mall, wears his hair fairly short, says two things convinced him that the war was wrong. "I saw so many of our men die. It just wasn't right." He was also affected by how badly the South Vietnamese people were being treated, as a result of the war.

On July 4, 1967, Barden's helicopter was shot down over the Mekong Delta. "When we were about 30 or 40 feet above the ground, the flight officer yelled for us to jump. I dove into some trees, and messed up both of my arms." Since then he has had 14 operations. The bones won't heal properly, and he is continually in and out of the hospital.

"I didn't really get active until late 1968," he said almost apologetically. "I started going down to Market Square in Houston and just talked to people about the war. The police began to harass me, and I got busted four times for 'conducting an illegal assembly.' Later I began to lead anti-war marches and demonstrations and got busted nine more times. I guess I've served about 60 days in jail because of my anti-war activity." He has also found it difficult to get a job, despite his two Purple Hearts, his Flying Cross and his Silver Star. "Some old ladies came up to me one time when I was talking about the war, and advised me to get a job. Well, most places won't give me a job if they know who I am, and when I did get a job at the Houston Airport, I got fired when I expressed my views on the war. Right now I'm living on disability checks."

Despite his intense feelings about the war, Barden wasn't sure if he supported the militant May Day demonstrations. "I haven't made up my mind yet whether I could support that type of disruption. I could support the type of thing we did at the Supreme Court, though. I don't think violence does any good, and I don't think blowing buildings up is right either. Nonviolence seems to work better. If it doesn't work this time, we'll just have to do this all over again. The main thing is to get them to withdraw all the troops by December 31. If the war does end by then, we can all say we did something here to end it. Everybody will be coming home."

Dennis Barden's parents are not happy about his anti-war activism. His father, a naval officer, has a standard line. "I fought my war, you fight yours." That's the way it used to be. Times are clearly changing.

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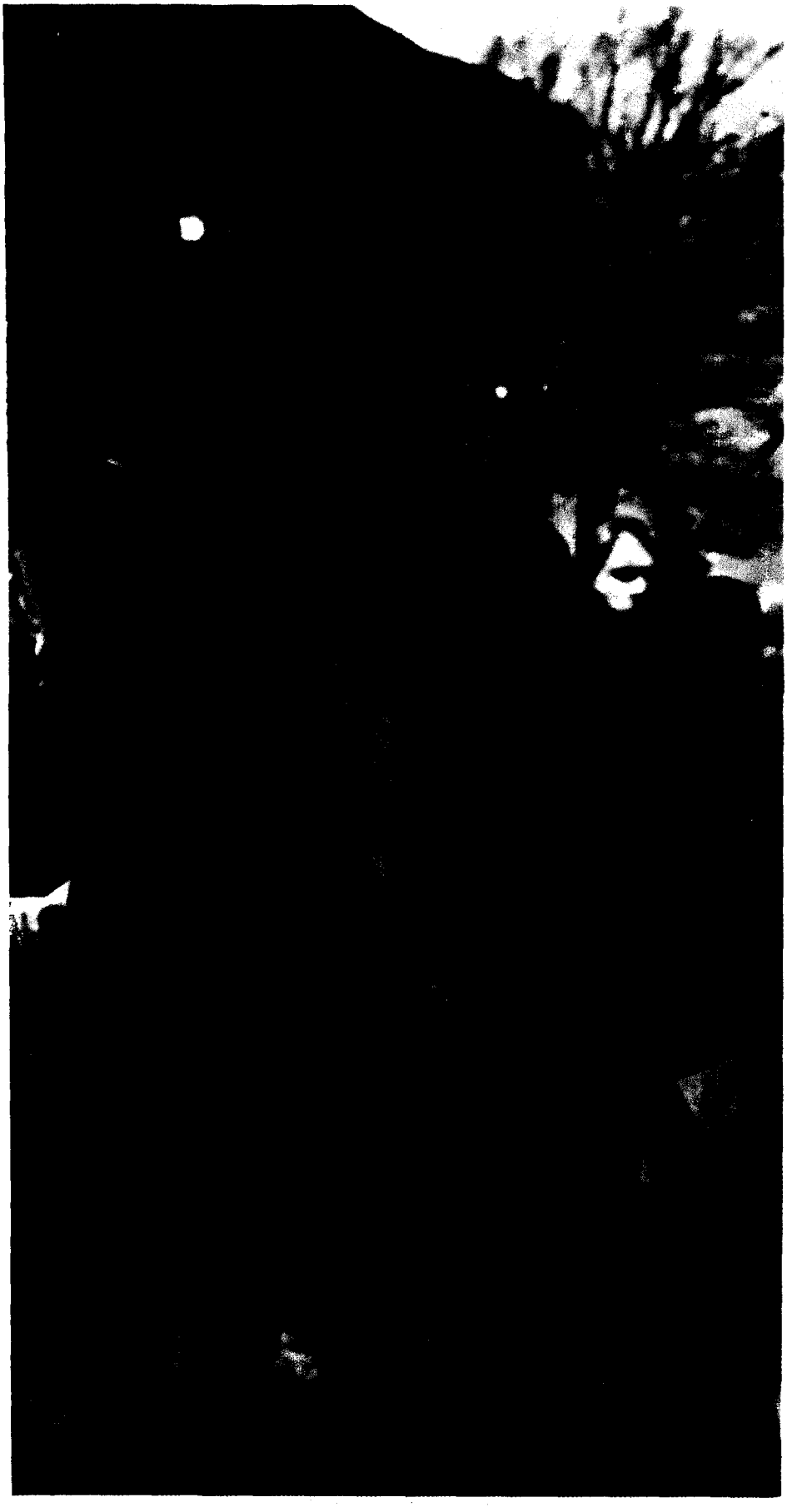

May Day: Anatomy of the Movement

The May Day demonstrations will probably be remembered for adding to the collage of bizarre images that will someday be one of the Vietnam war's legacies. A longhair riding the back bumper of a civil servant's sputtering Volkswagen like a broncobuster as he tried to get the hood open and the distributor cap pulled; troops airlifted into Washington parks in the grey dawn, alighting and running hunched over for cover as if expecting machine-gun fire; a 71-year-old woman informing newsmen that she had submitted to arrest to fight against imperialism and fascism and had finally gotten out of their savage detention camps by borrowing ten dollars from some righteous sisters; Attorney General Mitchell louring, lean-faced and flinty-eyed, from his balcony and looking at the mass arrests as though he wished they were mass killings instead.

by Michael P. Lerner

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May Day came and went, and what it all amounted to remained, for most people, unclear. It seemed like the worst of times and also the best. To the liberal congressmen who had jostled each other to get in the front of the sunny and goodnatured march a week earlier, it was an occasion to warn, proprietarily, of renegades like the May Day tribe who would destroy "their" peace movement. For the Nixon Administration, it was an occasion to crow over an action that had "failed" and to chuckle over the superior strategy of the forces of war and order. But 13,000 people had been arrested, and if they hadn't paralyzed the nation's capitol they had at least sent shivers down its spine. Energies which had languished in the year since Kent State were again aroused, and the use of mass civil disobedience without anyone getting killed presaged the development of a political force that could conceivably bring the war closer to an end.

But if it was a success, it was a greatly qualified one. For while it brought large numbers of committed people together and roused the movement, it also pointed up crucial weaknesses in the left which must be overcome. The following essay, written by an organizer of the Washington demonstrations, speaks to these problems, which are complex and will not be facilely resolved. The publication of this analysis is not intended to close the debate, but to open it. For only by an unflinching, if sometimes painful, look at itself today, can the movement go forward with any hope of success tomorrow. —THE EDITORS

THE MAY DAY DEMONSTRATIONS in Washington cannot be understood without recalling the profound effect that the Cambodian protests a year earlier had on the consciousness of movement organizers and on young people generally. In May 1970, more than 70,000 people came to Washington, D.C., to protest the invasion of Cambodia. The New Mobe had called the demonstration and had implied that there would be civil disobedience.

But at the crucial moment the Mobe failed to lead. It was severely split, with radicals and pacifists on one side (including people like Rennie Davis, Dave Dellinger, and groups like the Fellowship of Reconciliation and War Resisters League), and the Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance and Student Mobilization Committee (which SWP and YSA dominated) on the other. These Marxist-Leninists firmly opposed civil disobedience. And when the moment of decision came inside the Mobe, it was they who prevailed, because of their superior organizational strength combined with the indecisiveness and division of the radicals. The Trotskyists controlled the marshals for the demonstration, who were under the leadership of chief marshal Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers Party Presidential candidate in 1968. Halstead gave them strict instructions to prevent civil disobedience, using force if necessary.

The vast majority of people had come to Washington for civil disobedience, and would have acted on it even in open opposition to the marshals if they had been called to do so by the radicals. But an immediate fear of publicly splitting the Mobe made them hesitate, and that hesitation transformed the event into a meaningless march barely noticed around the country and bitterly denounced by many who had participated in it. In the aftermath, Rennie Davis, Dave Dellinger, Syd Peck and many others realized that a golden opportunity had been wasted, and resolved never again to let their actions be undermined by the Trotskyists. Their failure to lead in 1970 became a heavy burden on their consciences, and prepared the way for a complete split with the SWP, the dissolution of the Mobe, and the demonstrations of May 1971.

The dissolution of the Mobe was also made inevitable by the new recognition among large numbers of anti-war demonstrators that the issue of the war was intrinsically linked to other forms of domestic oppression and repression. This recognition had been part of the radicals' political field of vision since early in the anti-war movement; now it was becoming popularized even among groups like the American Friends Service Committee and the Clergy and Laymen Concerned About the War in Vietnam. But such a view was dogmatically opposed by the Trotskyists, who had always argued that mass mobilizations could only be built around single issues, and that protest about the war should not be somehow diluted by raising questions of poverty, racism and the like.

THE TROTSKYISTS AND THEIR Socialist Workers Party are essentially vestiges of the 1930s, and of the tense struggle between Trotsky and Stalin for the soul of the Russian Revolution. (Trotsky, who is a major and greatly misunderstood figure in the revolutionary tradition, would no more approve the contemporary Trotskyists of the SWP than would Marx and Lenin most of the self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninists running around in the American left these days.)

The SWP is a peculiar organization to be playing a central role in the New Left; like its traditional old left foe, the Communist Party, the SWP is organized as a democratic centralist "combat party" and is committed to old-speak Marxism-Leninism. The SWP and its Young Socialist Alliance emphasize the need to reach "ordinary people" in the United States, to radicalize workers and farmers. It sees itself as the vanguard of the revolution, and tries to channel revolutionary energy into its own organizational designs. "We are not simply a component of the mass revolutionary party," says the SWP. "We are the *essential* component that embodies in living cadres today the programmatic conquests that are essential for molding the kind of mass revolutionary workers party that can win the socialist victory in this country." This organizational chauvinism leads to the most sectarian policies when the SWP-YSA engages in domestic political activity. This is evident in its insistence on single-issue mass organizations, like those it has built around the war and women's liberation. By keeping the level of political discussion in its mass organizations simple and at a low level, it is able to attract large numbers. At the same time, when any members in these organizations begin to sense the interrelatedness of issues, they are recruited into the YSA and later into the SWP: "So you want to be a revolutionary: well, here we have a full-scale revolutionary program for you, complete with disciplined cadre and an elaborate ideology." The attraction of such a proposal to many new recruits to the anti-war movement is irresistible. After all, the New Left has nothing

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comparable to offer—it is organizationally in shambles, flirts with different and contradictory ideologies every other week, and is afraid to provide leadership for itself, much less put forward a vision for other Americans.

But the effect of all this is that the "vanguard" SWP, by its own dogmatism, acts to retard the political growth of the mass movements it has taken over for fear that the fronts would themselves begin to rival the party in providing a locus for serious radical activity. Hence, year after year it fights against broadening its marches to relate the war to poverty, sexism or racism, despite the fact that there is no reason to believe that those marches would diminish in size because of a broadened political perspective.

The split between the Trotskyists and the radicals in the anti-war movement was institutionalized during the summer of 1970 in the formation of an SWP anti-war group called the National Peace Action Coalition and a radical anti-war front called the National Coalition Against War, Racism and Repression. The NCAWRR, which later changed its name to the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice, included not only the traditional anti-war groups, but a variety of others, including Ralph Abernathy's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the National Welfare Rights Organization. It lacked, however, the support of radical students who felt betrayed by May 9th and who still thought of the People's Coalition as part of the old New Mobe, which had been discredited in their eyes by its failure to do more than engage in another of a series of marches.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, plans for May Day emerged during the summer of 1970. These plans were linked to another idea: that while the government refused to make peace with the Vietnamese, the people could declare a separate peace directly. The plan was to send a group, representing various segments of the American population, to Vietnam to actually negotiate a peace agreement with the Vietnamese; it emerged at the National Student Association Convention where Rennie Davis had been invited to speak. (Radicals were surprised to find that the NSA, only a few years earlier an integral part of CIA operations, had been markedly radicalized by the invasion into Cambodia.) The NSA adopted an ultimatum to the President saying that if the war in Vietnam was not terminated by May 1970, students would engage in massive non-violent civil disobedience on a regional and national level. The peace treaty idea was similarly endorsed.

The plan was now brought to the National Coalition Against War, Racism and Repression in Milwaukee. A position paper endorsing non-violent civil disobedience beginning May 1 in Washington, D.C., was adopted in principle. In the next months, the plan was brought back to most of the constituency groups and endorsed by them. Fred Halstead sat in on the meeting in Milwaukee as an invited spectator, so there was no doubt that the Trotskyists knew about the plans and the date.

But the Trotskyists had their own plans, which they counterposed to those of the National Coalition. With ritual monotony, they decided to promote a re-run of the mass march on Washington—a tactic that had been used year after year since 1965. Meeting in December, the Trotskyists' new mass organization, NPAC, called for a peace march on April 24, one week *before* the May demonstrations were planned to begin.

The People's Coalition had planned to have a massive peaceful rally on May 2nd, and to start civil disobedience on the 3rd. It was thought that many people who came on the 2nd could be persuaded to stay by the arguments put forth at the rally. The Trotskyists knew that it would be extremely difficult to convince people to stay in Washington for *two* consecutive weekends—another blow aimed at undermining the potential of the May rally.

Unlike the diverse groupings in the Coalition, the Trotskyists were as organized and disciplined as the Communists of old. The unshakeable determination of the Trotskyists to proceed with their demonstration forced the People's Coalition into a dilemma: would it be wise to split the potential strength of a mass assembly between two separate dates, or should they combine into one? While it was clear that the Trotskyists had deliberately created the split and caused the confusion, wouldn't it be destructive for the People's Coalition to proceed with its own plans? While the Coalition worried over this question, other forces were in motion that would provide at least a partial solution.

FOR RADICALS, THE PEOPLE'S Coalition had never seemed much of an answer to the problems of organization in the movement. While it was true that the Coalition was not a single-issue organization like the New Mobe, it was also true that the various organizations that were its constituents shared no common vision or analysis of American society. Further, though the name and the demands were different, these were for the most part the same people who had fecklessly allowed the New Mobe to channel the dissent of May 1970 into a meaningless march and who even now were agonizing over some way to reconcile activities so as not to come into open conflict with the Trotskyists. Recognizing this problem, a group of radicals resolved to work outside the structure of the Coalition and build an independent youth force committed to the May action. It was recognized that the Coalition's endorsement would be important for support among some constituencies, but since there was very little trust for the Coalition among young people, the youth force would have to have separate organizational status. The Treaty became the focus for building that separate organization (and thus a special target of the Trotskyists' attack).

National Student Association President David Ifshin chose a delegation of college student leaders to go to Hanoi and Saigon to negotiate the treaty. The trip had no financial angels—and the bills are yet to be paid. The delegation that went to Hanoi had no first draft ready, but the proposal it finally came up with seemed reasonable and it was quickly adopted by over 200 colleges when it was brought back in final form following meetings with Madame Binh and Xuan Thuy in Paris. To spur ratification within the U.S., a national conference of "Students and Youth for a People's Peace" was called for Ann Arbor on February 5-7 of this year, and was attended by over 2000 people. The conference endorsed the treaty and the May scenario. An organization was set up, composed of regional structures headed by a national coordinating council (which, however,

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**Photographs: Clockwise, from upper
Wide World, Fred McDarrah, Fred M**

subsequently failed to play any instrumental role).

Most experienced left people who attended the conference were very enthusiastic about May, but the May Day Collective organized by Rennie Davis which actually planned the demonstration in Washington was composed almost entirely of people who were new to the movement and who had had no previous experience in confrontation activities. People with movement experience gave two main reasons for not going to Washington to work on the action until it had actually begun. First was the fear of conspiracy indictments, following the Chicago and Seattle precedents. The Nixon-Mitchell regime had made quite clear its readiness to indict people for organizing demonstrations, and the absence of any national movement organization meant that people would have to face these indictments basically by themselves. Since there was no guarantee that the demonstration would be successful, it was unclear whether the risks would be worth it. The second obstacle to their participation came from the movement itself. Anti-elitism had reached such a fever pitch that virtually anyone who assumed leadership would risk being denounced for his or her efforts. A female activist, Anselma dell'Olio, described this phenomenon in a letter published in the *Liberated Guardian* in early March: "Productivity seems to be the major crime—but if you have the misfortune of being outspoken, and articulate, you are accused of being power-mad, elitist, racist, and finally the worst epithet of all, a male identifier."

THE DECISION TO FORM a separate youth organization to ensure an action even if the Coalition wavered was justified in the weeks after Ann Arbor. Faced with the inflexible decision by the Trotskyists to go ahead with their march on the 24th, and frightened that it did not have the organizational strength to compete, the Coalition decided to cancel its own rally on May 2nd and endorse the march instead. At the same time, the Coalition did not want to abandon its endorsement of civil disobedience. It unequivocally urged people to come to Washington on April 24th, and to prepare to stay for what was to come: The week of April 26-30 would be a massive People's Lobby in which government workers would be

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urged to sign the People's Peace Treaty and join in a government workers' moratorium May 3 to May 5; then, on May 3rd, the Coalition would join the May Day tribe in civil disobedience.

The Coalition's cancellation of the strategically important May 2 rally was a severe blow to May Day. Not only had the Trotskyists offered nothing substantive in exchange, they now used that cancellation as a way of further weakening the May Day demonstrations. Through their rather extensive communications network, the Trotskyists sent out the message that the demonstrations planned for May had been cancelled. A statement issued by the People's Coalition announcing the cancellation of its separate rally was distributed by YSA and SMC members as proof that the Coalition no longer backed anything associated with May. Virtually every public planning meeting for May held in March and early April was attended by squads of YSAers who came to violence-bait the May actions, and, most bizarre of all, to denounce them for being associated with a "liberal" demand—namely, acceptance of the Peace Treaty. (The Peace Treaty was denounced as liberal because the Vietnamese who wrote it had called for setting a date for withdrawal rather than for immediate withdrawal.)

Thus the Trotskyists tried to portray the "unauthorized" demonstrations as both violent and liberal. Very often they succeeded in confusing people, which was itself enough to undermine their determination to come to May. After all, there was some element of risk in the May demonstrations, and in a situation where there appeared to be a split among radicals about the desirability of taking that risk, the path of caution would be likely to win out. (Like their CP forbears, the Trotskyists manage to supply seemingly radical arguments for doing nothing or taking no risks.)

On April 24 at the march, the Trotskyists distributed free copies of their paper, the *Militant*, which purported to give "the truth about May Day." In a gesture that may someday be used by U.S. prosecutors as evidence that everyone knew that the May Day collective was trying to incite a riot, the *Militant* warns those who might be considering staying for civil disobedience, "Although it mouths niceties about the nonviolent character of its plans the May Day Tribe has been organizing its action in such a way as to almost guar-

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antee a violent attack on the demonstrators." (As it turned out, the demonstrators were almost totally non-violent. This was a direct result of the efforts of the May Day organization, which did everything in its power to ensure the non-violent character of the demonstrations: from holding classes in non-violent action, to publicly urging people who did not accept the non-violent discipline not to come at all.)

THE BEGINNING OF THE SPRING offensive came with the arrival of the Vietnam Vets on April 20. The vets' demonstrations made a tremendous impression on people, legitimating anti-war protest in the eyes of many who had not understood it previously.

The spirit of defiance among the vets was in marked contrast to the march on April 24th, which was passive and meaningless. Most of the people who came simply marched ritualistically a few blocks, then left without listening to the endless round of boring speeches. Dave Dellinger was the only radical speaker permitted on either coast by the Trotskyists and the only one in Washington scheduled to talk about why people should stay for May. (He failed to do so, primarily because he was in pain from an eye infection which later was to hospitalize him.) The speeches were televised, but when Dellinger seemed to be getting a bit too radical, his speech was interrupted for a few minutes of commercials. The entire rally had the air of a sporting event, and so it must have appeared to the TV audience.

On Sunday, April 25, the drama of May Day finally began to unfold. The government had authorized a permit for use of West Potomac Park. The area was extremely bad from a tactical standpoint, being on an isthmus jutting out onto the water, easily cut off by government police or troops. But it was all we had that was available, and there was a unanimous feeling among May Day people that there should be no confrontation over turf. The confrontation must be about the war, and it would not begin in earnest till May 3rd.

The people who set up tents and started camping out at "the land" (also called "Algonquin Peace City") were a strange mixture. May Day had urged people to come April 24th and stay, so there were a number of political people. But at least half the crowd was unmistakenly rock-concert lumpen, and many of the men were extremely chauvinistic; political people foiled several attempted rapes, and other women were hassled and demeaned. But at the same time, there was a great deal of community spirit and lots of mutual help. The movement glorifiers of the "new culture" saw in Algonquin City the fusing of politics and culture, because every night there was a town meeting at which political discussions were held and decisions about "the land" were made. But the bad drugs, the strychnine poisonings and the hasslings of women provided some cause for concern about the identification of rock culture with revolution.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE CULTURE and the predominance of anti-elitist sentiments reached their peak later that week when the May Day collective accepted an invitation by the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. Two of the five representatives chosen were selected on the basis of their being in touch with "the spirit of the land" in West Potomac Park. Rennie Davis, the most experienced, articulate and knowledgeable person in the entire operation, was deliberately excluded because he was a "superstar" and had received too much publicity and because the press had identified him—correctly—as the prime mover of the May Day operation. In a procedure typical of the inward orientation of the movement, little thought was given to the best way to bring the message about congressional inaction on Vietnam to the attention of the American people. Instead, the main question was how to present "ourselves"; the result was that of the five people chosen only Jay Craven, Boston University student body president, had been to Vietnam, and only Chip Marshall, a defendant in the Seattle conspiracy trial, had had any experience in the anti-war movement and treated the encounter as an integral part of the May action itself.

Marshall explained why many movement people viewed the senators as war criminals: they had the constitutional responsibility to stop the war, as well as the power to do so, but instead they had only made pious anti-war statements coupled with little effective action. Their function had been to deflect anti-war criticism by making people feel that there were people inside the Establishment who "really cared." Marshall put before the senators the central demand of the May demonstrations: if senators and congressmen are really against the war, they should filibuster against business-as-usual until the war is ended. May Day held that the minority in Congress—representing the majority in the country—should take decisive action to prevent any legislation or appropriations from passing. The Washington demonstrations were meant to put anti-war liberals on the spot: "No more Presidential campaigns launched on the anti-war movement, no more flowery speeches to assure your constituencies that you're in touch—we demand decisive action now to stop the war machine," said Marshall.

But other May Day delegates to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had different concerns. While the senators listened in shocked amazement, a woman calling herself "Kathy Sister" read a prepared statement discussing "our" experience on "the land": We have had many problems in our encampment on the Potomac, she told the Foreign Relations Committee; the presence of strychnine in the acid showed that we are not yet able to treat each other as true brothers and sisters, and we have come to realize how far we have to go in transforming ourselves. Then a representative from Gay Liberation talked about the way male characteristics had been manipulated to create "fighting man"; and a woman from a Washington women's collective talked about the gentleness, humanity and beauty of the Vietnamese people as qualities to emulate. The senators picked up on these themes, ignoring the demand that had been put before them to act in accordance with the fact that 73 percent of the American people wanted out. While the ensuing exchanges about acid and personal relations certainly exposed the chauvinism of the senators to the 70 people sitting in the room, they did not do much to advance the struggle against the war.

The decision as to who should testify was made the same way as most of the May decisions: whoever was working on any aspect of a project, from the rock concert to logistics for the land, and happened to be present at the time, participated in the decision. Since there was no formal de-

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cision-making apparatus, most such ad hoc groupings felt themselves more or less legitimate depending on the number of people who actually attended the meeting, and then attempted to clear their decisions with Rennie since everyone generally acknowledged his experience and power, at least informally. The only shared politics of these meetings, beyond acceptance of the basic scenario for May, was the spirit of anti-elitism, which usually translated itself into dismissing anyone with competence on the grounds of their competence. If you could demonstrate that you were new to the operation, had no clearly defined politics, no experience in comparable situations, and only a faltering ability to articulate what you thought, then you had an excellent chance of becoming a public spokesman or spokeswoman for the group.

The fiasco at Foreign Relations was not much noticed by the press, since it was largely out-shadowed by the beginning of civil disobedience in Washington. The week of April 25-30 was the week of "People's Lobby," a project directed primarily by the National Action Group. Each day the target shifted: Congress, IRS, HEW, Justice, Selective Service. The tactic was to leaflet government workers and talk to them about the war, urging them not to go to work during the government workers' moratorium on May 3-5. This was coupled with mass blocking of entrances to governmental offices in a non-violent and disciplined way, mostly through massive sit-downs. Each day a few hundred people were arrested and carted away, charged with unlawful assembly, and released on bond. The People's Lobby involved many older pacifists from around the country who did not particularly relate to "Algonquin Peace City."

ON SATURDAY, MAY 1, a rock concert was held on the northern grounds of West Potomac Park. The crowd was composed mainly of people who had come to Washington for the May actions and only incidentally for the rock concert. The regional representatives who had arrived Thursday and who did not share the May Day collective's enthusiasm for the culture used their power to eliminate the concert scheduled for Sunday evening, when Arlo Guthrie and Johnny Winters were to play. Some of the regional representatives felt the whole concert should be eliminated as well, to give more time for Monday's action. But Rennie Davis and the majority of the May Day collective felt strongly that Saturday's music should go on as scheduled, arguing that without it many people would become angry, since they had expected it, and might begin trashing (which was to be avoided at all costs). As a compromise, there was some attempt to make this rock concert more explicitly political, and several raps were given about Vietnam.

But just as the previous weekend's march had been fitted into the football format for TV, so the politics were fitted into rock-concert-ese by M.C. John Leland, who managed to homogenize everything into the mellifluous tones of "we are all together, we are beautiful, we are all having a good time, because that's what we are here for, a *goo-oood* time." After Jay Craven gave a moving speech about Vietnam, Leland took the mike and said, "Very important rap. Very important thing. Important things. Here are some more important things: Jennie meet Bill behind the stage. Steven Smith, your wallet has been found." There was almost no discussion of concrete details for the days ahead—Leland argued that that would bum out the crowd —but there were some political presentations of the new life-style. In fact, the residual sexism of the crowd almost got completely out of control when a gay brother in a flowing dress gave a speech about being gay. Instead of explaining Gay Liberation's rejection of socially defined roles, and the need for men to learn how to relate to each other as lovers instead of competitors, the spokesman focused on the need for men to "put on the dress," this year's substitution for "pick up the gun." "You recognized your own femininity," the speaker told the rock crowd of some 70,000, "when you started to grow your hair long. You've gone half the way, but now you've got to go all the way—start wearing a dress. Until you do that, you'll never be able to deal with your own sexism." Phil Ochs, standing backstage, said he felt so out of touch with this movement that he could not in good conscience urge people to stay for May: he had little faith in the movement's sanity. Jerry Rubin said, "I'm going to send Rennie a postcard saying, 'Thanks, Rennie, for the greatest trip of my life. (Signed) Jerry.' " At that point, Jerry kissed the ground, threw dirt in the air and exclaimed, "This is better than Woodstock."

The police moved in around 6:00 A.M. after the sound equipment had been removed and ordered people to leave Algonquin Peace City. The permit had been cancelled due to violations. The permit had allowed for only five tents on the land; since the previous Monday there had been countless tents, by Friday over 500. The government had picked its moment to move perfectly. People were exhausted or drugged out after the rock concert; no resistance was possible, though none would have been contemplated anyway, at least by the May Day leadership, which was so solidly committed to non-violence. With hundreds of police in full riot gear and the army's airborne units not far behind, people began to split. The prime destinations were the university campuses in town, although most of the regional

(Continued on Page 40)

Photographs by Richard Balagur

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Civil War in Ceylon

. . . Army officers boast that "once we are convinced prisoners are insurgents, we take them to the cemetery and dispose of them. . . . We have learned too many lessons from Vietnam and Malaysia. We must destroy them completely."

AMERICAN HELICOPTERS . . . Yugoslav artillery . . . British light arms . . . ammunition brought from Singapore . . . Soviet MIGs and helicopters . . . Indian frigates, troops and aircraft . . . army, navy, police security forces . . . .

In an exceptional example of international cooperation, this massive force has descended onto a small island half the size of Alabama to rescue its 12¼ million inhabitants from a band of rebels variously described as Guevarists and Maoists, Marxists, CIA agents, fascists, bandits and hooligans. How is it that on its first anniversary, the Ceylon government of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike draws up its balance sheet in blood with nearly 3000 dead, as many wounded, and its prisons and camps full to overflowing? How is it that the forces of "law and order" have come down with all their ferocity upon the same people who had helped to bring to power a progressive "left-wing" United Front government?

When the ruling reactionary United National Party suffered a humiliating defeat in the election of May 27, 1970, and was replaced by an alliance between Mrs. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party (which won 90 of the 151 seats in the House of Representatives) and two parties professing a Marxist allegiance (the so-called "Trotskyist" Lanka

by Tamara Deutscher

Wide World Photos

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Sam Samaja Party with 19 seats and the pro-Moscow Communist Party with 6 seats), the country was jubilant and full of boundless hopes for the future. True, the economic situation was extremely precarious. The outgoing United National Party, representing mostly the pro-Western compradore bourgeoisie, left the national cashbox nearly empty. The new government, promising to march "left and forward," assumed power when unfavorable terms of trade took a turn for the worse: falling prices for tea and rubber—Ceylon's main exports—slumped sharply, while the prices of nearly all manufactured goods which Ceylon has to import rose rapidly in the wake of worldwide inflation.

Yet there were reasons for the optimism. By the standards of Southeast Asia, Ceylon is exceptionally well off and contrasts sharply with poverty-stricken India, from which it is separated by only a 20-mile stretch of water. Its land is extremely fertile and abounds in a variety of fruits and vegetables, with the ubiquitous palm trees providing all manner of goods, ranging from raw materials for the building of primitive homes, to sleeping mats, fishing nets and ropes, from heady *arrack* to coconut milk and cooking fat. The population is highly literate and—for that part of the world—exceptionally healthy: over 85 percent of the people can read and write and their life expectancy jumped from 30 years in 1920 to over 62 years in the 1960s. Its political elite is highly educated and most of the left wing acquired a more than superficial knowledge of Marxism in their student days at English universities during the very pinky 1930s.

MAY 1970 MARKED the "spring of the people." During the first two months of its existence, the government made a few demonstrative gestures mainly in the field of foreign policy: it gave its recognition to North Korea, to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, to the German Democratic Republic; it unceremoniously asked the Peace Corps and other U.S. agencies to leave; it suspended its relations with Israel. As to internal affairs, there were perhaps more words than deeds. The promises of the United Front election Manifesto were repeated: the free measure of rice, halved by the previous administration, was to be restored; the plantation industry was to be controlled and "re-patterned" (whatever that might mean); the foreign banks nationalized; and, last but not least, a new Constitution was to make Ceylon "a free, independent, and sovereign socialist republic" in which, of course, nationalization, planned economy and a crash program were to absorb at least some of the 700,000 unemployed (one-fifth of the labor force), among whom the most vocal and frustrated were over 12,000 university-educated young people.

Before the first proverbial hundred days of Mrs. Bandaranaike's government were over, however, it became obvious that the government was stuck in the morass of a hopeless economic slump. It was afraid to "go left," as it had promised; it was powerless to move "forward" in the old groove of private initiative. It has remained dependent on foreign capitalist aid and tied hand and foot by its strings: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were exacting creditors, outraged by the most modest of welfare measures which the country "could not afford," and pressing for a drastic devaluation of the rupee. In Colombo's "city" the black market was flourishing and one could get as many as 20 rupees for a dollar while the official rate was only just above Rs. 5 (and the tourist rate about Rs. 8).

The possessing classes—which by American standards possessed very little indeed—tried to keep as much foreign currency abroad as possible. In his budget speech in October 1970, the Minister of Finance announced that Ceylon's short-term foreign debts alone reached $122 million; that the country spends $103 million more on imported goods than it earns from exports. If one added to the trade deficit figure the cost of servicing the debts and other payments, the total resources gap would amount to $218 million.

The measure of subsidized rice, which had played a considerable role in the election campaign, was restored, but by that time the cost of living was already so high and unemployment so widespread that thousands of people could not afford to buy even subsidized rice. The austerity budget—with "demonetization" of big value notes, the imposition of a capital levy, compulsory saving for companies and individuals, a ceiling on incomes, and similar purely fiscal devices which are prescribed by orthodox capitalist economists—was introduced by the versatile and clever Minister N. M. Perera of the so-called "Trotskyist" LSSP. Needless to say, they had as much effect as an aspirin on cancer.

BY AUTUMN 1970 it was clear that the "spring of the people" was definitely over. Most of the 1,900,000 who had voted for the old right-wing United National Party were lying low, watching with relief as the threat of socialism receded. But those who had voted for the left, especially for the so-called Marxist parties—the LSSP and the Communists—were more and more loudly demanding that the country be taken on the promised road to a "free, independent, socialist republic" and out of the mire of neo-colonialism into which it was sliding.

The rumble of drums, warning the government that it was being outflanked on the left, was heard very early—in August 1970. To forestall the danger Finance Minister N. M. Perera fired (or rather misfired) the first shot against a youth movement quite wrongly nicknamed Guevarist, branding it as a CIA agency. This accusation was so ridiculous that it smacked of cheap sensationalism. The "Guevarists," in the glare of the spotlights turned on their organization, presented themselves to the public. They expounded their ideas and ideals, their aims and their political *desiderata* to anybody who wanted to listen.

What astonished both the members of the group as well as their opponents was the number of uncommitted people who did want to listen. The meetings of the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna (the People's Liberation Front) were drawing bigger and bigger crowds in such disparate locales as Colombo's Hyde Park, in the industrial suburbs of the capital as well as in the provinces, in Ratnapura, the center of rubber plantations, in Runawella, Kegalla, and Galle. The JVP and their sympathizers marched, carrying pictures of Mao and Guevara, Castro and Lenin, Ho Chi Minh and

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Trotsky. Their demands and slogans at that time were not much more revolutionary than the pre-election promises made by the left-wing "Marxist" parties: they wanted to push the government on "to the road of Marx and Engels," nationalize all foreign assets, take over foreign-owned plantations, develop all natural resources and end the country's dependence on the duo-culture of tea and rubber.

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT, under one name or another, has been in existence since 1965 and conducted some semi-clandestine propaganda and educational work under the previous government. During the election campaign of 1970, in which its members supported the United Front, some of their militants were arrested under the all-too-familiar and well-worn pretext of "preparing a plot" allegedly meant to disrupt, with violence (of course), the peaceful processes of democracy. This accusation proved to be so illogical that it turned against the accusers. If anybody had an interest in "endangering the democratic process" it would surely have been the losing, not the winning, side.

Curiously enough, the doors of the jail were not opened immediately after the United Front's victory. An intriguing poster campaign, demanding the release of the prisoners, was needed before the leader of the movement, Rohan Wijiweera, was set free. Intelligent, educated, full of youthful energy, and an excellent speaker, Wijiweera at once acquired enormous popularity. Son of a pro-Moscow Communist, he had been a student at Lumumba University in Moscow. During the Sino-Soviet split he took a pro-Chinese position. When his political holiday in Ceylon was over, he found himself at the point of no return: his visa for Moscow was not renewed. His pro-Moscow line was at an end; his subsequent pro-Maoist period did not last long either. He appeared to give all his allegiance to the cause and to none of the leaders in power.

His group, which was quickly gaining in numbers and fame, consisted mainly of jobless students or ex-students who made it their business to conduct educational and propaganda work among the plantation workers and the Sinhalese peasantry. The "teachers of socialism" had an easy relationship with their "students." The Sinhalese masses view the intelligentsia with respect and without that sullen distrust which so often characterizes the attitude of the Western proletariat towards the educated. Also, the "educators" had retained close ties with the rural population; most of them had come from working-class homes or peasant huts and, probably encouraged by their elders, had taken full advantage of the university education provided free by the state.

Some genuine Marxists refrained from joining the Wijiweera organization because they could detect in it slight tones of Sinhalese nationalism, and in a country where the racial tension between the depressed Tamil minority (20 percent of the population) and the ruling Sinhalese majority (65 percent) is never far below the surface, the ear becomes especially attuned to such nuances. Another limiting factor in the Front's activities was the adherence to the theory of rural "foci" of the revolution: the JVP saw the peasant, not the industrial worker, as the main agent of social change.

However, one should not imagine that because Rohan Wijiweera and his Front occupied a great deal of space in the bourgeois press there were no other groups and organizations which felt frustrated and betrayed by the timidity and incompetence of the government. There was the Fourth International of Bala Tampoe, which never expected anything from the United Front and had not even taken part in the electoral campaign; and there was the Young Socialist League, with strongholds among the mainly Tamil plantation workers. When in December 1970 the People's Liberation Front concluded some sort of alliance with the two groups which could be accused neither of Sinhalese chauvinism (Tampoe himself is a Tamil) nor of underestimating the role of the urban industrial worker, their influence spread rapidly over the country, from the Tamil tea pickers to the cotton weavers of Velona factory in Colombo.

HOW NUMEROUS is the People's Liberation Front? How strong? How well armed and by whom? How determined was it to seize power? Was it really prepared and ready to overthrow the existing system, was it really ready to seize power by an armed uprising? Is Wijiweera or Tampoe another Lenin, able to build a revolutionary party in just a few months, when it took Lenin himself well over 15 years? Perhaps there is a Ceylonese Castro among the leaders of the Front? Could he have been as dangerous to Mrs. Bandaranaike's mild parliamentary regime as the real Castro was to the rotten dictatorship of Batista?

Mrs. Bandaranaike said that the young guerrillas, "backed by big money, diabolic minds and criminal organizers," were being used by "a gang of power-hungry, bloodthirsty, and treacherous schemers." Her communist Minister of Housing, Pieter Keuneman, chimed in with the warning that the manipulators were trying to set up a fascist dictatorship. How did it come about that against these "manipulators" and "schemers" the otherwise inert government could mobilize so much energy, show such ferocity in battle, secure for shooting and bombing the cooperation of five governments—the American, the Russian, the British, the Yugoslav and the Indian—the same governments which it is so difficult to bring together for peaceful purposes?

Despite the strict censorship and the expulsion of some respectable bourgeois correspondents, a great deal of information comes out of the embattled country, but it seems contradictory, confused and confusing. A few days after Commander-in-Chief of the Ceylonese Army General Sepala Attygalle claimed that the security forces had successfully crushed the insurgents, heavy artillery was brought out against them. No sooner were we led to believe that only "rural pockets" in southern and central Ceylon were still in the hands of the rebels than five Russian helicopters and two MIG fighters, complete with 60 "instructors" and "technicians," were sent to help rout the guerrillas.

It is even difficult to make sure who—the civilian government or the army—is in control of the country. It is not the government but the army officers who "rule out a truce with the insurgents." While Mrs. Bandaranaike is on the defensive in the face of world opinion and accuses the

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world press of unfair reporting, army officers boast that "once we are convinced prisoners are insurgents, we take them to the cemetery and dispose of them." "We have learned too many lessons from Vietnam and Malaysia. We must destroy them completely," Lieutenant Colonel Cyril Ranatunga was quoted as saying. These and similar statements were, of course, repeatedly denied by the government.

THE EVENTS WHICH culminated in bloody civil war and foreign intervention now seem far away and quite insignificant. During some skirmishes outside the American Embassy in Colombo on March 7, 1971, a policeman was stabbed. It was never made clear who demonstrated, and who killed the policeman. Were there some Maoist militants who wanted to show their solidarity with Hanoi? Or perhaps some ardent Buddhists, thinking with horror of the fate of their brethren in newly invaded Laos? To maintain law and order, Mrs. Bandaranaike brought out the army. Ten days later a state of emergency was declared and a 30,000-strong security force was mobilized. The People's Liberation Front was outlawed, its main leaders arrested, and a prolonged curfew imposed upon the entire country. Despite general nervousness, the situation did not seem to be fraught with too great danger.

The London Guardian saw Mrs. Bandaranaike "using a sledgehammer to crack a rather small nut," and challenged her to produce all available evidence of a "concerted plan for revolution." The Economist irreverently suspected that "Ceylon's accelerating economic difficulties may be the real reason behind the imposition of the emergency." In Colombo there was a frantic search to find out who was supporting and arming the guerrillas, whose numbers and strength seemed to be growing daily. As if to add a touch of the grotesque to what the conservative Daily Telegraph termed "a bizarre spy-thriller plot," it was revealed that at least 200 Chinese technicians were just then engaged in constructing, right in the heart of Ceylon, an elaborate building to the memory of Mrs. Bandaranaike's late husband, assassinated by a fanatical Buddhist monk in September 1959. "This has been Peking's Trojan horse," was the cryptic comment from a government official.

After a process of elimination, the North Koreans were alleged guilty of supporting the guerrillas and were expelled from the country. Would the Liberation Front now have to add to their banners the little-known portrait of Kim Il Sung?

Currently it is not so much the guerrillas and their bombs as foreign intervention that threatens to change the small island into a powder keg. The Russians have stepped in to support Mrs. Bandaranaike and her Communist and so-called "Trotskyist" LSSP Ministers, thereby forcing the Maoist "Trojan horse" to harness itself to the other, the revolutionary, chariot. But Mao has already proved that his revolutionary virtues are valid as long as there is no occasion to sin. The debacle visited upon the 500,000-strong Indonesian party which followed his advice should still weigh on his revolutionary conscience [see RAMPARTS, October 1970]. There was not much dogmatic purity in his relations with General De Gaulle, or in his friendship with the ultra-reactionary Ayub Khan, or, quite recently, in his calculated support for the Karachi government of Yahya Khan against the East Pakistani secessionists [see RAMPARTS, June 1971].

To the rescue of Mrs. Bandaranaike rushed also India, her nearest neighbor. Although there is not much love lost between the two, Mrs. Gandhi was anxious to secure for herself some reciprocity in case her own Naxalite guerrillas became more active [see RAMPARTS, April 1970].

FOR THE WESTERN powers, the acquisition now of a "stepping stone" in the Indian Ocean is a real godsend. The building of the "limited naval communication facility," as the planned Anglo-American base on Diego García (between Ceylon and Mauritius) is euphemistically called, may take at least three years. In this context it should probably be recalled that in Singapore in December it was precisely Mrs. Bandaranaike who invited the British and the Americans, as well as the Japanese and any other interested country, to form a joint naval force in the Indian Ocean. At the time it was thought that such a force could not be effectively organized for another decade.

Now, however, there are innumerable pretexts under which the "Pearl of the East" can easily be changed into an imperialist aircraft carrier: the much-talked-of danger of the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean may serve as one pretext. But the favorite one will probably be the competition between Russia and China, both wishing to extend their influence in Asia and perhaps driven to "fighting a proxy war with each other through their respective friends. . . ." The Economist, which reasons in this way, ends its article on a high moral note: "It would be a strange abandonment of what the West says it stands for if it left southern Asia to a two-sided competition between Russia and China."

How, in present circumstances, with 60 Soviet "instructors and technicians" in Colombo, Russia can accuse China of "meddling in the affairs of Ceylon . . ." and "betraying the communist world's interests" remains a puzzle which should be pondered deeply by both the pro-Moscow Communist P. Keuneman, who is in the government, and the pro-Peking Communist leader N. Shanmugathasan, who is in jail.

* * *

Ceylon, with her jungles, mountains and rocky redoubts, can be ideal guerrilla country. A glance at history may prove instructive: The West "discovered" Ceylon in 1505. The first to settle on her shores were the Portuguese; after 135 years they were ousted by the Dutch, who had gained control of the Maritime Provinces. Then in 1796 came the British, who opened up much of the interior of the country; but it took them nearly 20 years of hard fighting—two Kandyan wars—to conquer the independent Sinhalese kingdom perched high in the mountains covered by primeval forests and protected by boulders and rocks. What then does the future hold for guerrillas in Ceylon?

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Inside Los Angeles: The Coroner's Report

Over the past decade the deaths in Los Angeles of Marilyn Monroe, Robert Kennedy, the Tate murder victims and Janis Joplin all added their own chapters to the American Book of the Dead as edited by Dr. Noguchi, who conducted the inquest for all.

SHOULD A MAN BE CONSIDERED dangerous, if not mad, because he smiles too much? Two years ago the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors considered the question and, in a quick series of events during the spring and summer of 1969, fired the county coroner, Dr. Thomas T. Noguchi, then grudgingly welcomed him back—smile and all—after a Civil Service Commission hearing cleared the pathologist of all charges brought against him, which included taking drugs in excessive amounts, exhibiting behavior that showed a need for psychiatric care, improper administration of the coroner's office, and bullying employees.

The three-man Civil Service Commission which conducted the hearing in the Los Angeles Hall of Records sat for six weeks and listened to over 60 witnesses. Many of those called by the county to testify against Dr. Noguchi were asked to describe his smile and "graveyard sense of humor." The coroner's counsel at the trial contended that, rather than misplaced exuberance, these were the result of ethnic conditioning in Japan, where Dr. Noguchi grew up and where smiling is a traditional way of hiding grief; similarly, the macabre joke was part of the coroner's occupational jargon—the particular property of those toiling in the shadow of the morgue. The defense called pathologists from as far away as Detroit, Chicago and Wichita to testify that coroners were wont to joke as an outlet for their tensions and that "graveyard humor" was a form of comic relief all of them occasionally indulged in.

That a facial affect as innocuous as a smile should become the object of a bitter and costly legal wrangle tells as much of the specters that haunt the abode of the dead as it does of the paranoia that stains the sheets of otherwise clean corporation minds. If anything, the trial showed more of the infernal working of the county machine, including the morgue, than either the county supervisors or Dr. Noguchi would have wished to see revealed. The Civil Service Commission heard allegations of homicide victims dug up from the grave because someone had neglected to take fingerprints as required by state law; of parts of a dismembered body taken out of the coroner's office by a woman pathologist; of a nasty argument among several medical examiners about who was going to work on what body and on which table; of gurneys stacked with not one body but two during busy days in the morgue; and of one weird dinner party for a retiring employee at which Dr. Noguchi arrived in a sheriff's helicopter fresh from the scene of a plane crash and during which, the county charged, he had made himself look ridiculous by stating in a speech that he "had first come in a warship to the beautiful Harbor of Pearl and wanted to become an American." (At the time of Pearl Harbor Dr. Noguchi was 14 years old.) This same party was attended by television actor Ben Alexander—officer Frank Smith in

Illustration by George Willet

by Maxwell Boas

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the original "Dragnet" series and himself an old hand around the autopsy room—who reminisced nostalgically during dinner about "old times in the morgue" and remarked at one point that had this been 1942, Dr. Noguchi would have tried to shoot him.

Dr. Noguchi's trial revealed enough inter-office squabbles, suspicions, plots, rivalries and clumsy machinations to fill an up-to-date handbook on the peculiar status of death in Los Angeles—a companion volume to earlier observations by writers such as Nathanael West, Aldous Huxley and Jessica Mitford. Ever since the funeral of Rudolph Valentino, dying here has always meant something altogether different from what it means anywhere else. In a city of cemeteries built on the scale of Versailles, where the departed arrive groomed like poodles, it was only proper that the coroner become a *cause célèbre*. Over the past decade the deaths in Los Angeles of Marilyn Monroe, Robert Kennedy, the Tate murder victims and Janis Joplin all added their own chapters to the American Book of the Dead as edited by Dr. Noguchi, who conducted the inquest on all of them—thus earning both the envy and enmity of ambitious subordinates in the morgue, according to his defense during the hearing.

THE TWIN TINCTURES of contemporary poison—racism and bureaucratic lunacy—clung to many of the charges brought by the county supervisors against the chief of the coroner's office in the basement of the Hall of Justice. The hearing which reinstated him to his post cost the taxpayers $50,000 and Dr. Noguchi another $50,000. Most of his share of the cost was raised by JUST (Japanese United in Search for Truth)—a committee of supporters formed by leading members of the Japanese-American community in Los Angeles. The committee considered the trial the greatest injustice done to the Japanese-American community "since the dark days of 1942." Its members crowded the sessions of the hearing, applauding politely each time Dr. Noguchi's counsel scored a point in his defense. Support was not restricted to the Los Angeles area alone. During the course of the legal proceedings, expressions of sympathy poured in from all over California and the United States. President S. I. Hayakawa of San Francisco State College (who'd had his own problems the year before) fired off a telegram urging Dr. Noguchi to fight without stint. The news made the papers in Japan, and a number of reporters from large Tokyo dailies showed up in Civic Center to interview the coroner and to file stories on the case in court. They saw Dr. Noguchi's stand as an act conforming in all respects to the ancient Japanese code of *giri*—the almost mystical concept of obligation, honor and duty which binds the individual both to his family and society. Ironically, one of the major prosecution witnesses who put forward much damaging testimony against him was a Japanese secretary in his office. "She was pressured to testify against me," Dr. Noguchi says. "She wanted to be accepted as an American."

The question of patriotism—or the lack of it—never became an outright issue during the hearing, but it was implicit in many of the charges levelled against the coroner. Similarly, the counsel for the county supervisors never called him mentally disturbed, preferring to subsume the instances of his "erratic behavior" under a generic "sickness" that supposedly manifested itself in a number of symptoms. Foremost among these was a misplaced and outsized ambition in Dr. Noguchi's plans for his office as it allegedly strove to reach the "magic number" of 14,000 deaths (a number the coroner was said to have earmarked as the productive output for the morgue since taking it over in December 1967). At the opening session of the hearing when this charge was made, Dr. Noguchi stood accused of having gloated over the death of Robert Kennedy after receiving word that the senator had been shot. He had been heard to say, "I'm going to be famous. I hope he dies, because if he dies my international reputation will be established." An office typist testified that he had smiled while informing her that the senator was not going to recover. Another time, after a helicopter crash with a heavy loss of life, he was quoted as saying, "Isn't it nice? Isn't it nice?" The coroner was further charged with having prayed for disasters, especially plane crashes (including Mayor Sam Yorty's), so he could get his name in the papers. It was claimed that he frequently showed a "look of elation" or "slight smile" whenever tragedy struck the Los Angeles area, and that at the height of an influenza epidemic in the city three years ago a witness had seen him beam with joy while surveying the rows of gurneys stacked with bodies in the autopsy room. Another witness quoted him as saying at about the same time, "It's all mine. All mine." The final proof of his "sickness," according to the county counsel, was Dr. Noguchi's confession to some members of his staff that "I had a vision . . . that a 727 loaded to capacity crashed into a hotel. And amidst the flames, I, Thomas T. Noguchi, stood, and the press was there. . . ."

The trial heard allegations of assassination threats the coroner was reported to have made against a number of people, specifically against the person mainly responsible for his dismissal, County Chief Administrative Officer L. S. Hollinger, a 40-year veteran of county service. A secretary in the coroner's office said she'd seen Dr. Noguchi pull a knife from his belt and slash a piece of scrap paper in two while remarking that it "could be used to perform an autopsy on the living and perhaps to perform an autopsy on Mr. Hollinger." According to County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, Hollinger was so afraid of the coroner that he would not speak to him without an armed deputy sheriff by his side. When he made these threats, Dr. Noguchi sometimes smiled and sometimes looked serious, stated another secretary. Several members of his staff accused the coroner of being addicted to drugs, especially amphetamines, whose effects they claimed to have observed in such behavioral oddities as euphoria, feelings of omnipotence, irritability and nervousness, disconnected outpouring of ideas, paranoid fears for personal safety and hostility for other people.

At one session of the hearing the Civil Service Commission was told of a fantastic scheme—the establishment of a "forensic Mafia" which would give Dr. Noguchi control over all autopsy cases west of the Mississippi, leaving those east of the river to a pathologist friend of his. A number of witnesses testified that he had already earmarked several neighboring counties, including Orange County and River-

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side County, for annexation to his office. One witness, Dr. Noguchi's former No. 1 assistant, said his chief had a habit of suddenly jumping up from his desk, dashing across the room and slapping a map on the wall, shouting, "This is my jurisdiction!" And in order to make himself look important, according to his secretary, he carried a radio-signal "beeper" device on his belt which she was instructed to activate whenever he was giving a speech in public so his audience would be properly impressed, if not awed, by his hurried departure. (A former assistant claimed that once, while in a car going 30 m.p.h., he had been forced to restrain Dr. Noguchi from jumping out of the vehicle when the "beeper" on his belt suddenly began to sound its alarm.)

ONE OF THE MORE SPECTACULAR moments of the hearing occurred in connection with the death of a black coroner's aide whom Dr. Noguchi was alleged to have once told that he would work him "until he dropped." The county counsel then delivered his own bombshell—"And drop he did!"—noting that the funeral of the coroner's aide was taking place the following Monday. The aide, whom Dr. Noguchi employed as both bodyguard and chauffeur, had collapsed and failed to recover a few hours after he finished testifying against his chief's "erratic behavior" in office. The deceased's widow further informed the commissioners that just before his death her husband had admitted to her that Dr. Noguchi had once thrown a shoe at him and called him a "black bastard." The county claimed further that most of the other offenses the coroner committed in his office were directed against "little people"—specifically, a "Japanese secretary, a black secretary and a young kid." His secretary, a Japanese-American, said she'd heard him say he "hated all niggers, hated all Jews and hated all Japs." Another secretary testified he referred to all Orientals as "yellow submarines," while the toxicologist at the county morgue, a citizen of India, stated Dr. Noguchi had once told him, "Never trust an American," and that once when summoned to his office the coroner had greeted him with shouts of "Out! Out! Out! Out!"

A number of psychiatrists, mostly from the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute, concurred with the county that the coroner "could be helped by psychiatric counsel." One of them explained the results of a profile sheet which showed Dr. Noguchi as wanting to prove himself, being boastful, seeking praise and showing a tendency to get angry quickly when thwarted in his plans. On the basis of his scores, the dean of the University of Southern California Von Kleinsmid Center for International and Public Affairs concluded that he would never recommend the coroner for a high administrative post.

It was significant that when the Civil Service Commission handed down its decision at the hearing's final session none of the more vocal prosecution witnesses was present to hear it. Hollinger had chosen the day for a honeymoon trip to Las Vegas after marrying his secretary shortly before the outcome of the trial. County Supervisor Hahn did not call for a reopening of the hearing as he'd threatened to do following Dr. Noguchi's refusal to testify in his own defense. Other members of the coroner's staff who had testified against him either were on vacation or left the Hall of Records minutes before the decision came down. The commissioners' verdict calling for Dr. Noguchi's immediate reinstatement with full back pay had been expected. Shortly after their decision, Frank G. Bonnell, one of the five supervisors who had voted for the coroner's dismissal, told reporters that "from the lack of evidence of the county's charges which appear to be based mainly on innuendo, hearsay and pure fabrication, the Civil Service Commission's findings are clearly justified."

All of the witnesses called by the defense had given the commissioners a picture of Dr. Noguchi which differed considerably from that painted by the county counsel, who'd called the coroner a "complex collage," an "explosive man" with "grandiose ideas." They swore they'd never seen him perform any of the actions relative to the charges levelled against him. The judges were told that Dr. Noguchi's alleged abandon to joy in the midst of disaster had its foundation in distorted accounts of budget discussions in his office when he had pleaded for more equipment and personnel by presenting a sober statement of what might happen, rather than what he wished would happen; they said that all of these requests, including a trip to an AMA convention in Chicago and a new staff vehicle, had been consistently denied by Hollinger. According to defense witnesses, the "forensic Mafia" was merely a facetious figure of speech and a standing joke between Dr. Noguchi and a colleague on the East Coast; he had never taken any drugs but took medication for a lesion on his tongue; he'd been shocked and saddened by the death of Robert Kennedy and gladly would have given "part of his life so that the senator might live"; his office, rather than being anti-American, was a "delight in Americanism," where secretaries received fresh flowers on their desks at the beginning of the week and staffers were once treated to an office Christmas party paid for by Dr. Noguchi; his coroner's aide had died of terminal cancer and had been promoted during his employ by Dr. Noguchi himself despite the fact that his classification barred him from advancement; and that, far from being a racist, he'd long been known to complain that in shootings of blacks and members of other minority groups by police too many verdicts of justifiable homicide were returned and for this reason he wished to set up a committee which would protect their rights at inquests by excluding the police, the office of the DA, county officials and members of the sheriff's department.

At the conclusion of his trial, Dr. Noguchi, in the company of a group of Japanese-American supporters, walked down the hill from the Hall of Records to the coroner's office in the basement of the Hall of Justice where he sat down in his old chair and said, "Oh, I feel great, I feel good. I haven't been in it for a long time but this is the chair I sat in before."

TWO YEARS LATER HE'S STILL in the same chair, looking small and trim between the flags of the United States and the State of California which flank his desk. Inside one of the drawers are his boxes of color and black-and-white slides of autopsies he's performed or been associated with—approximately 10,000 by his own estimate. Apart from private showings for his own edification, he exhibits them mostly as visual illustra-

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tion to the speeches he gives at the rate of two a week (although his log of invitations registers far more). Most of the invitations come from civic and social groups ostensibly dedicated to raising the roof and spreading cheer; others come from professional organizations. Still fresh in the memory of the members of the American Academy of Forensic Science is a seminar he conducted three years ago during which he showed slides of autopsies so unusual that the average coroner would never encounter them in all his years of practice. Several months ago he watched in the privacy of his own office a videotape made of the autopsy on Jimi Hendrix in London, which he compared to the one he'd performed earlier on Janis Joplin. "Like him," he says, "I consider she already had a very used body. I think she went through a very hard life."

When Dr. Noguchi speaks, it becomes immediately apparent why he wrinkled the starch in the county cloth two years ago. In his green blazer, with its crest on the breast pocket, his striped tie, soft blue shirt and ready smile, he doesn't look like the faceless 20-year medallions doing service in the bureaucracy mints. He's *alive;* and for a coroner, that's something. There's a touch of sing-song in his voice which might easily be mistaken for laughter; and if it can drive the praetorians of county morality up the wall, then it's all to the good. But for all the apparent levity which his rambling speech might convey, he shows greater concern for the dead than the technocrats of Civic Center display towards the living.

"I try to handle this professionally," says Dr. Noguchi. "Not that I'm not sympathetic to death. I'm very sensitive to the family who lost a member but if I personally, emotionally, get involved and start to cry, well, what good is the county coroner who gets upset? He cannot do the autopsy. The one person who must be stable during death should be the coroner. Perhaps the reason is that I do consider very clearly what we have to work with is a sanctuary, in a sense; however, at the same time, like a blood stain. That is, a dead man tells a tale. It is up to me to find out this information, otherwise if I don't find out no one is going to find out."

The coroner has a retentive mind and he can cite the minutiae of hundreds of autopsy cases he has handled. Those of celebrities are engraved in his memory. He remembers in detail the first inquest he performed on a famous person. "It was Sunday, August 3rd or 5th of 1962. I was assigned this case and told to conduct the autopsy on Marilyn Monroe. Of course, I was rather puzzled and at first didn't believe it. I thought it must be someone else with the same name. . . . Her remains were brought here first. Later, armed with more scientific data, I went to the scene. We found a number of empty containers for containing pills. We looked for suicide notes or any notes indicative of self-destruction, but we couldn't find any. I would generally describe the deceased as after death showing a considerable difference. My impression at that time—I thought her facial expression was very peaceful. In most cases when death terminates a life the muscles relax and it looks very peaceful to me. . . ."

Dr. Noguchi was also one of the first to stand between the bloodied walls of the Tate home in Benedict Canyon, by his own admission the "most bizarre" case in his career. He also admits to knowing more than he testified at the Manson trial. "I will not be able to reveal details other than I testified." He smiles, but there is no joy in it. It is the reflex of one who has weighed the horror and the dread on the scales of mystery and magic. "I know more than I testified. I did not volunteer this information. I was not asked that which may not have anything to do with the hearing matter. Simply a scientific analysis, such as the behavioral life cycle of the deceased.

"I would say it was the most bizarre case I ever handled. In that form of massacre we had a couple of cases in which we were called upon the scene and as I entered, the body was hanging . . . [Dr. Noguchi gets up from his chair and demonstrates in the open space beside his desk. He bends down over his stomach and does a backward paddle with one arm while placing the other around his neck to simulate the constriction of the noose. He holds this pose briefly, then unfreezes and returns to his chair] . . . the body was hanging in the bathroom and the mirror here . . . [Dr. Noguchi points in the air] . . . He was not only hanging. The head was placed in this fashion and he was leaning like this [Dr. Noguchi leans to the right]. And not only that. Quite obscene language was written on the wall.

"This was in Hollywood in 1968. I will not be able to mention the name. It was a horrible scene. I hid my face. And then he had three needle marks. As a matter of fact a syringe was stuck in his buttocks. . . . I found out later he was an actor, age about mid-fifties. In fact, during the scene of the investigation I discovered a whip, and a number of other things indicated he may have been engaged in a number of sexually deviant activities. Apparently he'd been doing this quite often. As I was studying it was interesting to find out that his neck was indeed in a regular hanging-type noose, but he had one arm here [Dr. Noguchi twists his arm to the left of his head]. You see, he was holding the rope. He was nude, watching himself being hanged. That is a masochistic act. This was an older man and he used needles to stimulate further. But one of the things he did not count on was that he himself had a slight heart condition while he was doing it and he had a heart attack and fell and was caught by the noose."

THE EXHIBIT OF SLIDES accompanying his speaking engagements is titled the "Coroner in Action." It shows the job of the coroner, his surgical methods and the techniques he uses in establishing the cause of death. The latter in particular is Dr. Noguchi's forte. In his pursuit of forensic excellence he has perfected a technique which he calls the "medical-detective" approach to forensic pathology, combining the skills of the medic with the nose of the sleuth and the mysterious "sixth sense" of the hierophant. He credits the latter faculty with solving the less cut-and-dried cases, the stunners and the bafflers which require an intuitive, rather than a rote, approach. It is the "sixth sense" that tells him which case to investigate further and which tack to pursue during the scene of investigation. "I smell it or I feel it. I should be there," explains Dr. Noguchi. As an example he cites the case last October of a suspected homicide which turned out to be a suicide. It involved a 70-year-old Los Angeles father who

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died on the very day of his arraignment in court for neglect of his 13-year-old daughter. "We look for certain clues in a suicide . . . But in this case, not only did he leave two notes which were written by him, but he placed a plastic sheet by his side and he placed [his] left hand over the barrel and placed the gun to the right temple and the bullet was recovered. He was a definite suicide."

Conversely, his "sixth sense" solved a number of cases which at first glance appeared to be suicides but later turned out to be homicides. One of these, seven years ago, involved a woman found unconscious in a burning building in the ghetto area of East Los Angeles. "The burn area was very interestingly limited to the pelvic area and the inside of her thighs," Dr. Noguchi remembers. "She had a wig on, but interestingly enough—of course, I'm not Sherlock Holmes. I'm not that fancy. But I do take my time because the body is not going to go anywhere. You see, my reputation is at stake. I do not like to make even minor mistakes. You know, it was funny, there was a wig. I am no expert, but the front and back of the wig were twisted. We remove that wig and what we see is very interesting. It is like a bullet hole beneath the wig. But after careful examination it is not a bullet hole. What penetrated is very characteristic. I was able to see like this—about three punched holes. So I said, 'Ah-ha. Weapon will be stainless steel spike heel.' "

Two days later detectives found a pair of high-heeled shoes similar to the ones delivered proleptically by Dr. Noguchi's sixth sense operating in tandem with his medical-detective approach and its emphasis on a thorough, all-inclusive examination of the evidence at the coroner's scene of investigation. The latter encompasses not only his pet theory—the "behavioral pattern and life cycle of the deceased"—but goes beyond the human factor to include a "mechanical autopsy" in, for instance, car crashes when Dr. Noguchi submits the vehicles involved to an examination similar to an inquest in the morgue. In the case of actual victims he sometimes works his way through dozens of friends, relatives and acquaintances to determine if and how the "behavioral pattern and life cycle" of the deceased contributed to the cause of death. "I don't think cutting into the body alone would be sufficient to determine the cause of death," the coroner says. The medical-detective approach by itself, however, is not enough. Dr. Noguchi points out, "You must have certain integrity. You must be certain. You must do a lot of study. And I'm quite outspoken as you can see. And when I feel I have to, I speak out."

Dr. Noguchi finds it hard to relax. Even during casual expeditions in the city he maintains a vigilant eye for the kind of thing he might incorporate into his stock-in-trade. "I work like a medical detective. The sixth sense is aroused. There is a tenacious, a continuous digging and thinking. I don't dream about it. I do think nothing but the medical-detective approach or else developing a technique while I'm awake. For example, if I go to Sears, just walking through the carpentry department, you know what I think? I pick up this. A hammer. And I think, what kind of mark would this leave on a skull? My wife says, 'You're crazy,' but I tell my wife, 'Just a moment. I want to see how many different kinds of saws there are, so in case we find a dismembered body we can determine the thickness and the serration.' "

At home the coroner finds it equally difficult to decompress himself from the force of the medical-detective habit. If he is watching a television western he automatically analyzes the action on the screen from the viewpoint of forensic pathology, starting with the climactic shoot-out or death-trap, which is subsequently translated in terms of the coroner's scene of investigation. He then reverses all the frames that led up to the climax so the cause of death can be established from a retrograde study of the previous action. "I study frame by frame how the death occurred. General Custer's death, for example. The cowboys are attacking the Indians. My job is to develop, column by column, scene by scene, how the death occurred."

ALMOST TWO YEARS AFTER his reinstatement, some of the charges the county brought against him continue to puzzle Dr. Noguchi. "This matter of Robert Kennedy was included in the charge, but it didn't make sense to me. Of course, I think anyone who has an opportunity to investigate something like this is always subject to undue criticism based on jealousy and a number of things. It almost seems like a joke to me now. It is perhaps a dangerous thing for any professional man to become too well-known. Ha-ha-ha. In many ways I think the ironic part of this trial was that it made me more famous than before. Of course, I'm no different from anyone else, but it seems nearly two years ago I was considered a folk hero for the community. Many Japanese came from Japan with briefcases showing clippings saying, he has been badly beaten and crucified and here he stands. So I have nothing to hide. The whole thing was like David and Goliath.

"What came out was there was no foundation. Some of the things the prosecution came up with were too much. But I did not do it for selfish reasons. If I'd done it for selfish reasons I'm sure community support would not have come. But I felt this way. As the first Oriental American to be ever appointed as county department head, if he succumbs to undue, say, pressure, political pressure, by resorting to the easy way out, then the second man . . . may be denied the opportunity. Generally I would say there was no racial bias. But during the course of the investigation there were many disturbing remarks. One top medical man said, 'We are not ready for a Japanese coroner . . .' "

* * *

The Los Angeles Hall of Justice sits in Civic Center like Stonehenge in the smog. It's a building dedicated to order —the orderly process of death in the coroner's basement offices and the orderly process of law in the chambers and courtrooms on the upper floors. The integration of the coroner's turf with the barristers' aerie shows how law and death have at last become compatible enough to cohabit: Upstairs the judge dishes it out from the plate in his head and downstairs the stiffs are up for a nose count. It works like a charm, and it's going to work better yet. At Dr. Noguchi's trial, one fellow pathologist praised the coroner for being "in the process of developing probably one of the most outstanding offices in the world."

Maxwell Boas is a freelance writer who has lived in the Los Angeles area.

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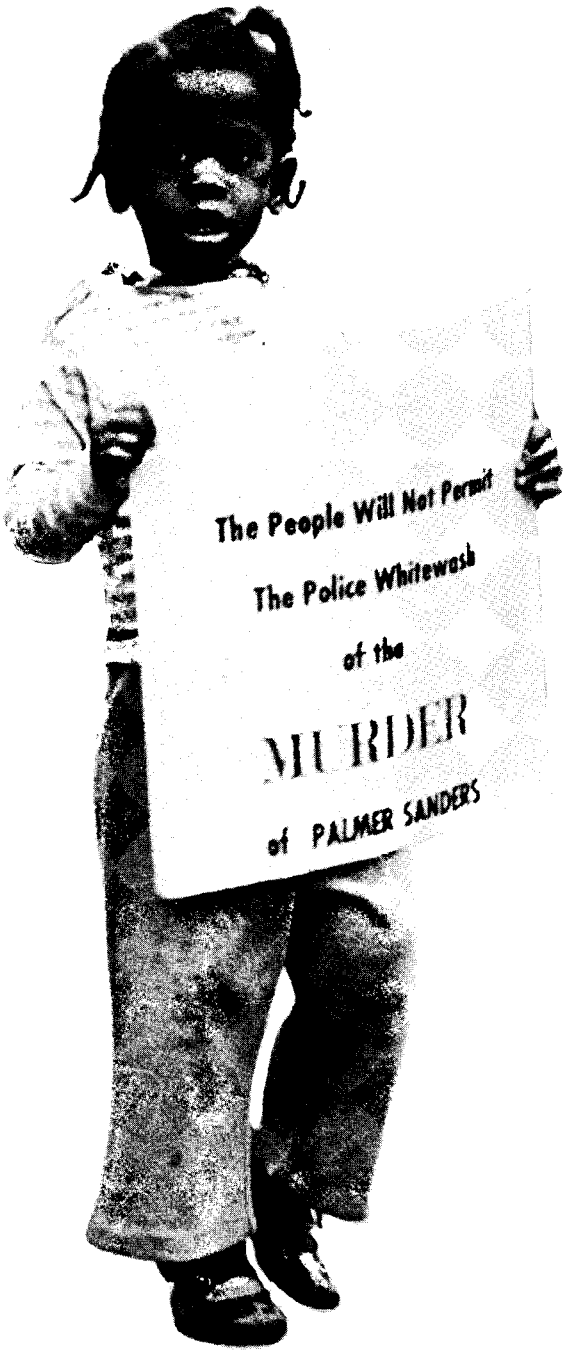

Battle for the South: Phase Two

THE INCREASE OF NATIONALIST feeling among Southern blacks as a result of the civil rights and black power movements resulted in a passionate attachment to the resources in the domain of the community, including schools. One legacy of segregation had been black schools, administered and attended by blacks. While blacks neither exercised control of the schools nor had any influence on what was taught, at least teachers were responsive to community sensibilities, violent attacks on black students by whites were impossible, and the learning environment was familiar and relaxed.

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Under the Nixon Administration's "racial balance" guidelines, however, even this minimal buffer has been lost. For integration is throwing black students into hostile all-white environments where they are viewed as intruding minorities and suffer the full intensity of racist hatred. The incident last year in Lamar, South Carolina, when a battalion of white parents overturned a school bus full of children en route to an "integrated" school, is indicative of the degree of hostility faced by blacks.

The segregated system was racist as well, and relegated black people to subjection and domination by their colonial oppressors. But true freedom and self-determination are only achieved when an oppressed people takes control of its own destiny. Obviously this is not possible in the kind of integrated environment the Nixon crew has prepared. The very concept of integration as articulated in the United States grew out of the notion of the cultural superiority of whites. Consequently, the implementation of "racial balance," which is at the core of the current integration program, not only denies blacks their community resources and institutions of cultural development and self-determination but forces them to embrace racism in its most sophisticated but no less pernicious manifestation.

As the court decisions ordering local school boards to implement "racial balance" were handed down, it immediately became apparent that the chief result of the actions would be the phasing out of black schools and their conversion into vocational training facilities. Once the black high schools were phased out, black students were divided into small groups and shipped 10 to 15 miles to all-white schools, run by all-white school boards in all-white neighborhoods. In these schools, manipulative racism went into action through a channeling process which deems only a limited number of blacks eligible for college, the rest being advised to go back to the vocational training facilities set up as dumping grounds for most black students.

Abolishing black schools meant also their dismantling as centers of cohesion among blacks. Under the new "integration system," the potential for black unity and community strength present in black schools will be stifled within the framework of a white environment in which blacks exist as an inevitable and precarious minority group. As a tragic and ironic commentary on this, black administrators and instructors have been left jobless in the wake of the Nixon civil rights "progress," because the integrated school systems regard them as having been educated at "inferior" institutions, and therefore not qualified to teach in traditionally all-white situations. (The endless pieties about "separate but equal" which were used to defend the old segregated system are thus exposed for all their hypocritical emptiness.)

In community after community in the South, blacks have bitterly protested the phasing out of schools and academic facilities that have traditionally served them. Even integrationist organizations have complained that the integration movement has been misconstrued as an effort to associate with whites, rather than to achieve equal rights. Eliminating the black community's institutions, they point out, is a travesty of integrationist programs. The tale of desegregation in two cities, Gainesville and St. Petersburg, Florida, illustrates the nature of the struggle to defend black institutions that has developed in the past year and provides portents of the future.

IN GAINESVILLE THE SCHOOL BOARD became a focal point of black protest when it announced that the local black high school would be phased out as an academic institution and reduced to a vocational facility. With the support of the community, 90 percent of the student body at the black school staged a walk-out and launched an organizing campaign to swell daily marches and picket lines. Parents accompanied their children to school board meetings, demanding the maintenance of the academic standard of the school. After two weeks of tension and unrest, a federal court approved the school board's decision and "racial balance" was implemented in the city. As had been predicted, hostility sharpened between white instructors and black students, and among the students themselves. According to the Black Student Union, white students were given privileges over blacks and were treated tolerantly when charged with school offenses, while black pupils were summarily suspended for minor offenses.

Racial tension had been growing at a steady pace in Gainesville when the inevitable explosion occurred. As a gesture of contempt for the black students, a group of white pupils calling themselves the "KKK" raised the confederate flag on the school's flagpole. When black students attempted to stop the white students' show, a small-scale "riot" erupted. The police were called in and several blacks were taken into custody on numerous charges. Following this spectacle came a clear illustration of the menacing harassment experienced by black students. Arrested and charged with taking six dollars from a fellow white student at knifepoint, Ike Booth, a high school organizer for the Junta of Militant Organizations, was convicted weeks later and sentenced to 15 years in Florida State Prison.

In St. Petersburg, the school board announced in August 1970, just weeks before the term began, that the local Gibbs High would be phased out. As in Gainesville, tensions mounted and in April of this year a black female student was beaten half-conscious during an argument with two white female students. The Dean of Women escorted the white students home, while the black woman was suspended. In the protest which followed, a "disturbance" between white and black students resulted in injury to blacks and arrests. Some are still incarcerated in detention homes. Following the disturbance a gang of whites known in the St. Petersburg area as "the Beach Boys" invaded the campus armed with chains to attack black students. The blacks responded with the formation of the Black Student Union Coalition, a city-wide group drawing its activists from the "integrated" white high schools. Black students celebrated the formation of the Coalition by walking out of all the junior and senior high schools in St. Petersburg. For several days demonstrations were held to demand that discrimination in the schools cease at once.

Thus the strategy of isolating blacks and putting them in vulnerable positions in the white community has begun to backfire. The unity which has developed out of this more desperate situation promises to provide the basis for a far

by Charles Fulwood

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(The Tribunal of Palmer Saunders)

more cohesive organization of the black community than was possible previously. The indiscriminate brutality and racism directed against black children leaves the black community with no mild choice. This can be seen from the participation in the struggle of integrationists as well as black nationalists. Both revolutionary nationalists and moderate integrationists demanded that the Gibbs high school remain an academic institution. The integrationists took the position that the school was a cultural and resource institution of the black community and that "racial balance" could be achieved without phasing out the school: white students could be bussed into Gibbs, which was in a convenient location.

THE NATIONALISTS BEHIND THE leadership of the Junta of Militant Organizations (JOMO) plunged into the issue with a different perspective. Community meetings were organized to politicize the issue as one of self-determination. The importance of the present crisis, JOMO maintained, wasn't that it revealed the school board's fat-mouthing about "racial balance," but that it exposed the methods used to deny blacks their democratic right of self-determination. The all-white school board obviously did not speak for the black community, nor did it have the consent of the community for its program. Therefore nothing it decided was legitimate as far as the black community was concerned. The Gibbs decision was not only an acute case of white supremacy but it also revealed the dictatorial method which was utilized constantly to deny the black community its right of self-determination.

After a series of community meetings, the Committee for Black Education was formed to provide a flexible matrix in which diverse opinions could find expression without undermining the basic unity of action. Since all political constituencies in the struggle agreed that the school should remain as a black academic institution, the nationalists did not press their position as antagonistic to the integrationists. In the words of Joseph Waller, chairman of JOMO and chief spokesman for the nationalists: "Since the entire community is upset about this issue, we are unified on the main subject. We prefer not to disrupt our strength because of differences of approach. The retainment of Gibbs receives top priority and when the school board peeks at us crazy, wild niggers down there demonstrating, they'll be happy to negotiate with other tendencies should they not meet our demands."

The Florida pattern of black rebellion and massive repression following desegregation orders has been repeated elsewhere in the South. March 1971 saw white students in Wilmington, North Carolina, march in protest against black student walk-outs, demanding that all blacks be prevented from attending schools until they show a "willingness to learn." In the wake of massive black walk-outs, and after weeks of tension in which one black, Eugene Wright, was killed by shotgun blasts as he answered the door of his house, and a pitched battle occurred at a local black church, a Wilmington judge, John Walker, made the comment, "We should have sent in Lt. Calley to clean them up."

In St. Petersburg, too, the repression has escalated. Just recently, Palmer Saunders was shot through the back of the head by two police agents. Police claimed that Saunders

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had tried to sell them marijuana and had then planned to kill them. Though police say that Saunders robbed them, one of them (by their own account) was able to maneuver behind him and shoot him through the neck. After the shooting, 2500 black people attended a tribunal organized by JOMO which raised the pertinent question: if Saunders "robbed" the agents, how was it that he overlooked the revolver which the agent used to kill him?

The tribunal was representative of the kind of community participation that revolutionary nationalists are promoting in the South. The same grass-roots people who participated in the tribunal are also involved in the Uhuru Cultural Festival, first organized by JOMO in 1969, which the community has taken over. An annual affair, the festival brings together black poets, organizers, entertainers, artists and political speakers for a week of events aimed at increasing the national consciousness of blacks.

THE RISE OF JOMO IS ITSELF indicative of the new mood in the South. Founded in 1968 at the time of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., JOMO claims to have no ambitions of becoming a vanguard organization but rather seeks to build a grass-roots movement. Its newspaper, *The Burning Spear,* serves as the organ of some 12 black organizations in the state which are members of the recently formed Black United Front. Each organization renders financial and political aid to members in trouble or under attack.

JOMO's position on coalitions with white groups is also indicative: "We welcome assistance from citizens of the colonial government who recognize the justness of our struggle. We only demand that this assistance be given on a 'no-strings-attached' basis. We understand that there are many [whites] who use our self-determination concept as an excuse not to give support to us . . . ." Terming this "objective racism," JOMO goes on to say that it does not favor making coalitions with whites at this juncture in the struggle. "This does not mean that there is no conceivable time when JOMO can work with white groups when it is in our political interest to do so." Rather, it means that coalitions made with whites "from a position of relative powerlessness does not serve the interest of blacks." According to JOMO, to disregard this reality of dependency, and to form alliances with white groups under such conditions, "would make us opportunists and lackeys. . . ."

The evolution of JOMO from its origins in 1968 dramatizes the specific historic experience of black people in the period following the civil rights battles. At its inception, JOMO deliberately structured itself as an anti-white paramilitary cadre organization. This isolated it from the majority of the black community, but JOMO accepted its isolation as legitimate and necessary at that stage. For the organization functioned then not only as an antagonistic force towards whites and the police, but also towards blacks who clung to the popular but brittle blessings of integration. During the period following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., black people did not have the tactical flexibility and could not afford the luxury of a defensive position. It was time to take the offensive, to demonstrate the vulnerability of the racist enemy and to expose by resistance the manipulative racism of the government. Organizationally, nationalism had to be legitimized as a political force. And black people needed a taste of offensive struggle to replace the indignity of having to explain their grievances and apologize for their actions to the enemy.

But as the consciousness of the community increased to a higher level, the time came to build organizational and functional unity among blacks on the basis of common oppression, which ideological differences had tended to obscure. The enemy had been exposed as tactically flexible and strategically vulnerable. Defeatism in the black community was being transformed into a willingness to fight, and the integrationists were beginning to recognize that nationalists were not the enemy.

The revolutionary nationalists, too, experienced a dialectical change in the new situation. On the one hand JOMO had promoted the military image and a willingness to fight. Now the organization was giving supreme emphasis to education and organization. Its program assumed a broader approach towards organizing and its politics were characterized by a more mature attitude based on practical experience and subjective calculation. Standing at the center of cohesion among blacks in Florida, JOMO still claims to be a revolutionary force. But if you should ask Chairman Joseph Waller how JOMO intends to liberate black people, he will tell you: "We gonna do it with peanut butter and jelly."

Charles Fulwood has worked with the Revolutionary Nationalist movement in the South and on the East Coast since 1967.

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(Continued from page 25)
groupings had also made arrangements to stay in various churches that had been volunteered as movement centers.

But what the people discovered as they entered town on Sunday was that martial law was in force for them, even though it was never declared. People were told they could not be on streets, or in parks, or together in groups of three, and were herded from place to place by riot-geared police. Under severe pressure from the government, the campuses declared the people were not welcome there, and on Monday police were called in and mass arrests were made at Georgetown. In the chaos of Sunday, the police provided one sure avenue of safety: they urged people to avoid arrest by leaving town. Many did, though some returned the next day, because they were able to stay at the University of Maryland which made available 700 places in the dormitories. There were about 70-75,000 people at the rock concert, at least 30,000 of whom either never intended to stay or left town as a result of the unexpected police raid that morning. About 35,000 people remained and were on the streets Monday morning.

IT CAME OFF AS SCHEDULED. A detailed tactical manual of 20 printed pages included photographs and maps of the targets that were to be hit by the different regional groupings. In the weeks before May 3rd, regions had been urged to send groups of people to Washington to look over their targets and the surrounding areas. The main targets were the bridges leading into town from Virginia, and several key traffic circles leading to the main governmental thoroughfares. The tactics were decided regionally: basically they consisted of either sitting down in front of traffic, stalling cars, or standing in front of traffic and then using mobile tactics, i.e., moving down the block as the police came so that they could block traffic there. The police, of course, had easy access to the tactical manual since it was widely distributed and generally available. By mid-Sunday afternoon each of the targets was completely guarded by thousands of police and regular army armed with M-16s. Police helicopters kept careful surveillance of the movement of demonstrators throughout the next three days. Demonstrators were particularly wary of being trapped in their sleeping places—they feared an encirclement that would prevent them from getting to their targets and disrupting traffic. So they tended to make the opposite mistake of getting to their targets too early.

Demonstrations at most targets began at 6:00 A.M., well before the heaviest rush hour traffic began. The demonstrators were quickly routed from many places, and arrested by the thousands at others. The police tactic of mass arrest was not unexpected. Though the papers played it down, there were many instances of police brutality, as club-swinging cops beat and bloodied many heads. But while on an absolute scale the number of such incidents was high, it was very low on a scale relative to the number of arrests. Most people arrested received little hassle; they were simply placed on buses and shipped off to the prisons and later to the large concentration camp at JFK stadium. The police used much tear gas around the bridges but very little at the traffic circles closer to the downtown areas. Again, martial law, while not declared, was enforced. Anyone who looked vaguely representative of the new life-style was subject to arrest at any moment. Several hundred people who had no intention of relating to the demonstration were thus arrested. You did not need to be in the action to get arrested: as long as you were outside you were a target for the police.

The spirit of the people in the detention camp was very high. Despite the fact that there were almost no sanitary facilities, no blankets, and for a long time no food, the demonstrators were spirited and together. As each new group arrived there was cheering and singing from the crowd inside. A Viet Cong flag was raised over the compound. Most of the people in the compound were not booked or even formally placed under arrest; they were able to keep their belongings. On Tuesday many of them were released on a federal court order since they had been illegally detained—there was no record for many of them showing why they had been arrested or by whom.

But it was not all pleasant. The police set off tear gas from time to time to keep people "under control." And it was far from pleasant in the crowded Washington jails, where several thousand demonstrators were taken and then often doused with tear gas. By evening the arrests had climbed to 8000, the largest figure for any anti-war demonstration in U.S. history. By Wednesday the figure was to top 13,000. The high number of arrests was particularly important for dispelling the impression the government and press had conveyed on Sunday that almost everyone had left town and that only a small number of demonstrators remained. It showed the commitment of the demonstrators —many people were willing to put their bodies on the line in some meaningful way.

Mass arrests had apparently been decided on by Attorney General Mitchell and communicated to Police Chief Wilson; the Black mayor of the town, Walter Washington, was not consulted about the mass arrests. The reaction from the Black community was immediate. On Tuesday morning an extraordinary press conference of religious and community leaders from the ghetto announced their support for the demonstrators and offered moral and material aid. They announced that the homes of the Black community would be open for those who were being thrown out of university sanctuaries and that they would make a contribution to the bail fund. On Tuesday a march to the Justice Department was led by members of the Black community.

THAT MARCH AND RALLY were in marked contrast to the march to the Pentagon the day before, also called by the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice. On Monday the Pentagon march had been scheduled at the same time as the May Day actions and the PCPJ found that it had very few constituents, as less than a thousand people participated in three separate march attempts, each of which was stopped and busted. On Tuesday, the PCPJ called its action for late morning, after traffic disruptions had ceased, and many May Day people showed up. About 5000 rallied at the Justice Department. (Rennie was in jail: on Monday afternoon, walking back from a press conference, he was seized by eight FBI agents and arrested on charges of conspiracy to block governmental operations and to interfere with the civil rights of government workers. Fellow Chicago defendant John Froines was named as co-conspirator and arrested at the

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Justice Department demonstration on Tuesday. On Wednesday night another Chicago defendant, Abbie Hoffman, who had played no organizational role whatever in May Day, was busted at his New York apartment for crossing state lines with intent of inciting to riot. Many more indictments were expected.)

The demonstration at Justice on Tuesday was a massive sit-down in front of the building, which was suddenly sealed off and surrounded; 3000 people were arrested. This time the government was more cautious to get everyone's name and the name of the arresting officer. Attorney General Mitchell supervised the arrests from the fifth floor of the building. On Wednesday there were no traffic disruptions planned—instead, the tactic was a mass march to Congress. Government workers held a support rally at Lafayette Park, but the permit allowed only 500 into the park, which was surrounded by police to enforce the limitation. Outside the police lines several thousand more government workers milled around, listening to speeches. From there they marched to the Capitol, where May Day people had gathered on the House steps to listen to several congressmen and congresswomen address the crowd. As one of them spoke, police moved in on orders from Speaker of the House Carl Albert; over 1500 were arrested.

It is interesting that the discipline of non-violence was kept throughout the day-long demonstration, despite considerable provocation from the police and considerable disagreement among some of the demonstrators about the value of non-violence. In this way the demonstration lived up to the claims of its organizers, who had used the symbol of Gandhi sitting cross-legged, with raised fist, as the symbol of the entire May Day protest. It is also important to note that most of the participants in the demonstrations were people with some movement background. It was estimated by many regional representatives that at least 70 percent of the people who came to Washington would have come even if there had been no commitment to non-violence, and that without that commitment there might have been much more sustained disruption.

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE held Monday morning after the roads had been opened by army and police, May Day people were asked to admit that they had failed in their stated goal to stop the government. The May Day tribe was asked to explain its slogan, "If the government won't stop the war, we will stop the government." The spokesmen agreed that from a strictly military standpoint the demonstration had failed, but that no one had ever had a military interpretation of the slogan. It was absurd, of course, to believe that people could both be committed to non-violence and actually physically stop the government from functioning. The government had ordered its key personnel either to come in Sunday night or arrive at work by 5:00 A.M. It had reserved rooms in downtown hotels for many. And it had a fleet of helicopters ready to assist others.

The May Day objective had been a political one: to set in motion forces that could stop the government and then stop the war. Those political forces might actually have been set in motion if the focus on Congress, as a body with the power and the mandate but without the will to end the war, had been communicated to people around the country. That message will certainly be taken home to the hundreds of communities towards which the tired army of the Potomac, dwindled from its 40,000 strength of Monday, started to make its way on Wednesday.

In terms of shaking people from their apathy, and stopping business-as-usual in the Capitol, the May demonstrations were clearly a success. People may have been at their desks, but it was the demonstration against the war, not their business, that was the main focus of attention, not only on Monday but throughout the week. And the depth of sentiment and urgency about the war had once again been brought to the attention of the country. Whatever other criticism one may have about May, this result surely made the whole effort worthwhile.

Another important success of the May Day demonstrations was the Women's March held on Sunday afternoon. The march had over 1000 participants, who managed to get together despite the attack by the police on Algonquin Peace City earlier in the day. The march was spirited and one of the best actions of the entire series of demonstrations. It reflected a new prominence of women's leadership in anti-imperialist struggles, a prominence confirmed in the regional coordinating council of May Day which was heavily influenced by that leadership. The regional groupings, formed around May Day, were another promising development—they provided much leadership during the demonstrations, and were generally more thoughtful and better experienced than the May Day collective. Unfortunately the May Day collective tended to guard its power jealously and did not allow the regional groupings much room to grow, but now that the demonstrations are over the regions have indicated a determination to stick together and begin to chart some new directions for the summer.

AT LEAST TWO OF THE crucial goals, however, of the May Day strategy did not occur: the demonstrations in Washington did not touch off a rash of similar demonstrations around the country; and the organizing for May did not create thousands of collectives that would engage in ongoing organizing at the local level. Both of these goals had originally been taken seriously by Rennie and the May Day collective, but without any real organization to pull off the more grandiose plans, the old dynamic of one-shot national actions took hold again, and all resources were mobilized to ensure that people actually came to Washington. The notion of the D.C. arrests as tinder for an inflammable country would have worked if the movement had had a national organization to take up the cause. Without one, the idea was merely one of a series of hopes that were shattered against the hard rock of present-day political realities. (Of course, a national organization that continued to espouse the inward-oriented ideology of the current movement would have done almost as badly.)

The left could provide the direction for leading people out of the war, just as it once provided the leadership in revealing that the war was wrong. At the same time, it could help people make sense of their increasingly chaotic experience in an American empire in continual internal crisis. But just at the moment when sentiment in the country is

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opening up these possibilities, the left seems bent on making itself appear irrelevant to the vast majority of the people. When it approached government workers about the war, it did not even mention the connection between the war and the inflation which had been used a week before as Nixon's excuse for denying them a salary increase. Issues like inflation, health care, taxes, transportation, and even work conditions, are often written off by the organized left as "liberal." In their place, concern for the quality of people's relationships becomes an exclusive center of attention.

But even as the left is about to make a breakthrough around that concern, it stops itself and decides that it is in no position to talk to people about their lives, since the lives of movement people are screwed up too. So the focus shifts to our own lives: until we are good exemplifications of the new revolutionary person, we have "no right" to talk to anybody else. In the process the relationship between how our own lives have been formed and the structure of a capitalist society falls by the wayside, and the movement becomes totally transfixed on itself. Even when, as in May Day, the inwardness is temporarily overcome, it still permeates every aspect of the planning and organizing for the event. Hence we are fighting against the war not because we oppose American imperialism, but because the Vietnamese people are beautiful, having supposedly already achieved the changes in social and personal relations that we are striving for. And we choose our public spokeswomen and spokesmen not because they are good at communicating to others, but because they show what *we* are really like. The thought that somehow we must embody the revolutionary goals before the revolution takes place is just an extreme reaction to the earlier doctrine of the Old Left—that we make the revolution without any concern for transforming ourselves in the process. Both attitudes are destructive.

The reaction to elitism was certainly an understandable response to the extreme forms of male domination, manipulativeness and chauvinism in the old movement. The syndrome of "superstar," which reached its apex around the Chicago conspiracy trial, was extremely stifling and retarded the political and personal development of most New Left activists at the same moment that it was building the egos of the "heavies." The absence of a national organization to which these heavies could be held politically responsible increased the separation between these leaders and their supposed base. But the extremes to which the anti-elitist reaction has gone can only be explained by a fuller understanding of the failures of the movement to break out of its early isolation. Frustrated by its own powerlessness, and seeing this less in terms of its inflated rhetoric and unwillingness to talk to ordinary people than in terms of its own internal structure and mind sets, the movement began to turn this frustration inward upon itself. But while it may be easier (as well as necessary) to deal with the powerhouses in our own movement, in many ways this has inhibited the struggle against the real power in America: the ruling class. The result has been a politics of spontaneity and personal development that has intensified the movement's isolation and inwardness while, paradoxically, strengthening the position of the heavies who, in the absence of a national organization, remain the only recognizable spokespeople for the entire movement.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THIS impasse ought to combine the vitality, creativity and originality of the New Left with some of the discipline and organization, and a lot of the outward orientation, of the old. It ought to be national in scope in order to be able to develop national strategies and offer a coherent direction to the energies that have been unleashed against American capitalism in the past few years. If these energies have often developed in a somewhat parochial direction, at least part of the reason has been the absence of an organizational structure which would make coordinated attacks on the system even conceivable.

Such an organization would have to avoid the major pitfalls of the past. Unlike SDS, which was built around a very undefined politics and spent several years trying to achieve such definition, it would have to start with an explicit set of radical politics. It would have to experience its radicalism not in the outrageousness of its rhetoric or the impenetrability of its jargon, but in the extent to which it mobilized sections of the population into active struggle against the system. It would have to see itself moving beyond campus and youth constituencies: addressing the problems of working people, women, the aged, the poor, and avoiding the tired formulas of Old Left sects or the arrongance and superiority the New Left has sometimes fallen prey to. It would have to reject categorically the anti-intellectualism of the current movement that parades under the banner of anti-elitism, while simultaneously struggling against the chauvinism and manipulativeness that caused the anti-elitist reaction. It would have to see itself as providing leadership, and not just as an instrument for self-development. It would have to be democratically structured to maximize local autonomy and creativity. It would have to encourage and strengthen community organizing projects, but at the same time it would have to overcome the parochialism of current movement organizing projects that always seem to counterpose their own activities to national strategies and actions.

Without the development of this kind of organizational structure, the next year will see the forces of the New Left splitting in equally useless directions: surges of new Marxist-Leninist sectarianism, increased isolationism ultimately ending up in the farmlands of America (the greening movement), and desperate attempts to get back into touch with reality by moving back into the system via the left wing of the McGovern-Kennedy-Bayh-whoever campaigns.

The movement has got to get it together now. It may not get another chance for a long time to come.

Michael P. Lerner, a defendant in the Seattle conspiracy trial. After serving five weeks in federal penitentiary on a contempt citation stemming from his trial, Lerner attended the Ann Arbor conference and later worked with the May Day collective in Washington for the month preceding the demonstrations.

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Lennon:
The Working-class Hero Turns Red

"I felt an obligation . . . to write a song that people would sing in the pub or on a demonstration. That is why I would like to compose songs for the revolution now. . . ."

T.A.: Your latest record and your recent public statements, especially the interviews in Rolling Stone *magazine, suggest that your views are becoming increasingly radical and political. When did this start to happen?*

John: I've always been politically minded, you know, and against the status quo. It's pretty basic when you're brought up, like I was, to hate and fear the police as a natural enemy and to despise the army as something that takes everybody away and leaves them dead somewhere. I mean, it's just a basic working-class thing, though it begins to wear off when you get older, get a family and get swallowed up in the system. In my case I've never not been political, though religion tended to overshadow it in my acid days; that would be around '65 or '66. And that religion was directly the result of all that superstar shit—religion was an outlet for my repression. I thought, "Well, there's something else to life, isn't there? This isn't it, surely?"

But I was always political in a way, you know. In the two books I wrote, even though they were written in a sort of Joycean gobbledegook, there's

many knocks at religion and there is a play about a worker and a capitalist. I've been satirizing the system since my childhood. I used to write magazines in school and hand them around. I was very conscious of class, they would say, with a chip on my shoulder, because I knew what happened to me and I knew about the class repression coming down on us—it was a fucking fact but in the hurricane Beatle world it got left out—I got farther away from reality for a time.

T.A.: What did you think was the reason for the success of your sort of music?

John: Well, at the time it was thought that the workers had broken through, but I realize in retrospect that it's the same phony deal they gave the blacks, it was just like they allowed blacks to be runners or boxers or entertainers. That's the choice they allow you—now the outlet is being a pop star, which is really what I'm saying on the album in *Working Class Hero.* As I told *Rolling Stone,* it's the same people who have the power, the class system didn't change one little bit. Of course there are a lot of people walking around with long hair now and some trendy middle-class kids in pretty clothes. But nothing changed except that we all dressed up a bit, leaving the same bastards running everything.

* * *

T.A.: When did you start breaking out of the role imposed on you as a Beatle?

John: Even during the Beatle heyday I tried to go against it; so did George. We went to America a few times and Epstein always tried to waffle on at us about saying nothing about Vietnam. So there came a time when George and I said, "Listen, when they ask next time, we're going to say we don't like

by Robin Blackburn and Tariq Ali

Photographs by Dan Richter

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that war and we think they should get right out." That's what we did. At that time this was a pretty radical thing to do, especially for the "Fab Four."

It was the first opportunity I personally took to wave the flag a bit. But you've got to remember that I'd always felt repressed. We were all so pressurized that there was hardly any chance of expressing ourselves, especially working at that rate, touring continually and always kept in a cocoon of myths and dreams. It's pretty hard when you are Caesar and everyone is saying how wonderful you are and they are giving you all the goodies and the girls, it's pretty hard to break out of that, to say, "Well, I don't want to be king, I want to be real."

So in its way the second political thing I did was to say, "The Beatles are bigger than Jesus." That really broke the scene, I nearly got shot in America for that. It was a big trauma for all the kids that were following us. Up to then there was this unspoken policy of not answering delicate questions, though I always read the papers, you know, the political bits. The continual awareness of what was going on made me feel ashamed I wasn't saying anything. I burst out because I could no longer play that game any more, it was just too much for me. Of course, going to America increased the build-up on me, especially as the war was going on there. In a way we'd turned out to be a Trojan Horse. The Fab Four moved to the top and sang about drugs and sex and then I got into more and more heavy stuff and that's when they started dropping us.

R.B.: Wasn't there a double charge to what you were doing right from the beginning?

Yoko: You were always very direct. . . .

John: Yes, well, the first thing we did was to proclaim our Liverpoolness to the world, and say, "It's all right to come from Liverpool and talk like this." Before, anybody from Liverpool who made it, like Ted Ray, Tommy Handley, Arthur Askey, had to lose their accent to get on the BBC. They were only comedians but that's what came out of Liverpool before us. We refused to play that game. After the Beatles came on the scene everyone started putting on a Liverpudlian accent.

T.A.: In a way you were even thinking about politics when you seemed to be knocking revolution?

John: Ah, sure, "Revolution." There were two versions of that song but the underground left only picked up on the one that said "Count me out." The original version which ends up the LP said "Count me in," too; I put in both because I wasn't sure. There was a third version that was just abstract, *musique concrète,* kind of loops and that, people screaming. I thought I was painting in sound a picture of revolution—but I made a mistake, you know. The mistake was that it was anti-revolution. On the version released as a single I said, "When you talk about destruction you can count me out." I didn't want to get killed. I didn't really know that much about the Maoists, but I just knew that they seemed to be so few and yet they painted themselves green and stood in front of the police waiting to get picked off. I just thought it was unsubtle, you know. I thought the original Communist revolutionaries coordinated themselves a bit better and didn't go around shouting about it. That was how I felt —I was really asking a question. As someone from the working class I was always interested in Russia and China and everything that related to the working class, even though I was playing the capitalist game. At one time I was so much involved in the religious bullshit that I used to go around calling myself a Christian Communist, but as Janov says, religion is legalized madness. Therapy stripped away all that and made me feel my own pain.

* * *

R.B.: This analyst you went to. . . .
John: Janov . . .

R.B.: His ideas seem to have something in common with Laing in that he doesn't want to reconcile people to their misery, to adjust them to the world, but rather to make them face up to its causes?

John: Well, his thing is to feel the pain that's accumulated inside you ever since your childhood. I had to do it to really kill off all the religious myths. In the therapy you really feel every painful moment of your life—it's excruciating, you are forced to realize that your pain, the kind that makes you wake up afraid, with your heart pounding, is really yours and not the result of somebody up in the sky. It's the result of your parents and your environment. As I realized this it all started to fall into place. This therapy forced me to have done with all the God shit. All of us growing up have come to terms with too much pain. Although we repress it, it's still there. The worst pain is that of not being wanted, of realizing your parents do not need you in the way you need them. When I was a child I experienced moments of not wanting to see the ugliness, not wanting to see not being wanted. This lack of love went into my eyes and into my mind. Janov doesn't just talk to you about this but makes you feel it—once you've allowed yourself to feel again, you do most of the work yourself. When you wake up and your heart is going like clappers or your back feels strained, or you develop some other hang-up, you should let your mind go to the pain and the pain itself will regurgitate the memory which originally caused you to suppress it in your body. In this way the pain goes to the right channel instead of being repressed again, as it is if you take a pill or a bath, saying, "Well, I'll get over it."

Most people channel their pain into God or masturbation or some dream of making it. The therapy is like a very

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slow acid trip which happens naturally in your body. It is hard to talk about, you know, because you feel "I am pain" and it sounds sort of arbitrary, but pain to me now has a different meaning because of having physically felt all these extraordinary repressions. It was like taking gloves off, and feeling your own skin for the first time. It's a bit of a drag to say so, but I don't think you can understand this unless you've gone through it—though I try to put some of it over on the album. But for me at any rate it was all part of dissolving the God trip or father-figure trip. Facing up to reality instead of always looking for some kind of heaven.

R.B.: Do you see the family in general as the source of these repressions?
John: Mine is an extreme case, you know. My father and mother split and I never saw my father until I was 20, nor did I see much more of my mother. But Yoko had her parents there and it was the same.

Yoko: Perhaps one feels more pain when parents are there. It's like when you're hungry, you know it's worse to get a symbol of a cheeseburger than no cheeseburger at all. It doesn't do you any good, you know. I often wish my mother had died so that at least I could get some people's sympathy. But there she was, a perfectly beautiful mother.

John: And Yoko's family were middle-class Japanese but it's all the same repression. Though I think middle-class people have the biggest trauma if they have nice imagey parents, all smiling and dolled up. They are the ones who have the biggest struggle to say, "Goodbye mummy, goodbye daddy."

T.A.: What relation to your music has all this got?
John: Art is only a way of expressing pain. I mean the reason Yoko does such far-out stuff is that it's a far-out kind of pain she went through.

R.B.: A lot of Beatle songs used to be about childhood. . . .
John: Yeah, that would mostly be me.

R.B.: Though they were very good there was always a missing element. . . .
John: That would be reality, that would be the missing element. Because I was never really wanted. The only reason I am a star is because of my repression. Nothing else would have driven me through all that if I was "normal" . . .

Yoko: . . . and happy. . . .

John: The only reason I went for that goal is that I wanted to say: "Now, mummy-daddy, will you love me?"

T.A.: But then you had success beyond most people's wildest dreams.
John: Oh, Jesus Christ, it was a complete oppression. I mean, we had to go through humiliation upon humiliation with the middle classes and showbiz and Lord Mayors and all that. They were so condescending and stupid. Everybody trying to use us. It was a special humiliation for me because I could never keep my mouth shut and I'd always have to be drunk or pilled to counteract pressure. It was hell. . . .

Yoko: It was depriving him of any real experience, you know . . .

John: It was very miserable. I mean, apart from the first flush of making it —the thrill of the first No. 1 record, the first trip to America. At first we had sort of an objective like being as big as Elvis—moving forward was the great thing, but actually attaining it was the big letdown. I found I was having continually to please the sort of people I'd always hated when I was a child. This began to bring me back to reality. I began to realize that we are all oppressed, which is why I would like to do something about it, though I'm not sure where my place is.

R.B.: Well, in any case, politics and culture are linked, aren't they? I mean, workers are repressed by culture, not guns, at the moment. . . .
John: . . . They're doped.

R.B.: And the culture doping them the artist can make or break. . . .
John: That's what I'm trying to do on my albums and in these interviews. What I'm trying to do is influence all the people I can influence. All those who are still under the dream and just put a big question mark in their mind. The acid dream is over, that is what I'm trying to tell them.

* * *

R.B.: Even in the past, you know, people would use Beatle songs and give them new words. "Yellow Submarine," for instance, had a number of versions. One that strikers used to sing began "We all live on bread and margarine"; at LSE we had a version that began "We all live in a Red LSE."
John: I like that. And I enjoyed it when football crowds in the early days would sing "All Together Now"—that was another one. I was also pleased when the movement in America took up "Give Peace a Chance," because I had written it with that in mind really. I hoped that instead of singing "We Shall Overcome" from 1800 or something, they would have something contemporary. I felt an obligation even then to write a song that people would sing in the pub or on a demonstration. That is why I would like to compose songs for the revolution now. . . .

* * *

R.B.: Your album, Yoko, seems to fuse avant garde modern music with rock. I'd like to put an idea to you I got from listening to it. You integrate everyday sounds, like that of a train, into a musical pattern. This seems to demand an aesthetic measure of everyday life, to insist that art should not be imprisoned in the museums and galleries, doesn't it?
Yoko: Exactly. I want to incite people to loosen their oppression by giving them something to work with, to build on. They shouldn't be frightened of creating themselves—that's why I make things very open, with things for people to do, like in my book [*Grapefruit*]. Because basically there are two types of people in the world: people who are confident, because they know they have the ability to create; and then people who have been demoralized, who have no confidence in themselves, because they have been told they have no creative ability, but must just take orders. The Establishment likes people who take no responsibility and cannot respect themselves.

R.B.. I suppose workers' control is about that.
John: Haven't they tried out something like that in Yugoslavia? They are free of the Russians. I'd like to go there and see how it works.

T.A.: Well, they have, they did try to break with the Stalinist pattern. But

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instead of allowing uninhibited workers' control, they added a strong dose of political bureaucracy. It tended to smother the initiative of the workers and they also regulated the whole system by a market mechanism which bred new inequalities between one region and another.

John: It seems that all revolutions end up with a personality cult—even the Chinese seem to need a father figure. I expect this happens in Cuba too with Che and Fidel. . . . In Western-style communism we would have to create an almost imaginary workers' image of *themselves* as the father figure.

R.B.: That's a pretty cool idea—the Working Class becomes its own Hero. As long as it was not a new, comforting illusion, as long as there was a real workers' power. If a capitalist or bureaucrat is running your life then you need to compensate with illusions. . . .

Yoko: The people have to trust in themselves.

T.A.: That's the vital point. The working class must be instilled with a feeling of confidence in itself. This can't be done just by propaganda—the workers must move, take over their own factories and tell the capitalists to bugger off. This is what began to happen in May 1968 in France . . . the workers began to feel their own strength.

John: But the Communist Party wasn't up to that, was it?

R.B.: No, they weren't. With ten million workers on strike they could have led one of those huge demonstrations that occurred in the center of Paris into a massive occupation of all government buildings and installations, replacing De Gaulle with a new institution of popular power like the Commune or the original soviets—that would have begun a real revolution, but the French CP was scared of it. They preferred to deal at the top instead of encouraging the workers to take the initiative themselves.

John: Great . . . but there's a problem about that, you know. All the revolutions have happened when a Fidel or a Marx or a Lenin or whatever, who were intellectuals, were able to get through to the workers. They got a good pocket of people together and the workers seemed to understand that they were in a repressed state. They haven't woken up yet here, they still believe that cars and tellies are the answer. . . . You should get these left-wing students out to talk with the workers, you should get the school kids involved with The Red Mole.

T.A.: You're quite right, we have been trying to do that and we should do more. This new Industrial Relations Bill the government is trying to introduce is making more and more workers realize what is happening. . . .

John: I don't think that bill can work, I don't think they can enforce it, I don't think the workers will cooperate with it. I thought the Wilson Government was a big let-down but this Heath lot are worse. The underground is being harassed, the black militants can't even live in their own homes now, and they're selling more arms to the South Africans. Like Richard Neville said, there may be only an inch of difference between Wilson and Heath but it's in that inch that we live. . . .

T.A.: I don't know about that; Labour brought in racialist immigration policies, supported the Vietnam war and were hoping to bring in new legislation against the unions.

R.B.: It may be true that we live in the inch of difference between Labour and Conservative but so long as we do we'll be impotent and unable to change anything. If Heath is forcing us out of that inch maybe he's doing us a good turn without meaning to. . . .

John: Yes, I've thought about that, too. This putting us in a corner so we have to find out what is coming down on other people. I keep on reading the *Morning Star* [the Communist newspaper] to see if there's any hope, but it seems to be in the 19th century; it seems to be written for dropped-out, middle-aged liberals. We should be trying to reach the young workers because that's when you're most idealistic and have least fear. Somehow the revolutionaries must approach the workers because the workers won't approach them. But it's difficult to know where to start, we've all got a finger in the dam. The problem for me is that as I have become more real I've grown away from most working-class people—you know, what they like is Engelbert Humperdinck. It's the students who are buying us now, and that's the problem. Now the Beatles are four separate people, we don't have the impact we had when we were together. . . .

* * *

R.B.: Now you're trying to swim against the stream of bourgeois society, which is much more difficult. . . .

John: Yes, they own all the newspapers and they control all distribution and promotion. When we came along there was only Decca, Phillips and EMI who could really produce a record for you. You had to go through the whole bureaucracy to get into the recording studio. You were in such a humble position, you didn't have more than 12 hours to make a whole album, which is what we did in the early days. Even now it's the same—if you're an unknown artist you're lucky to get an hour in a studio; it's a hierarchy, and if you don't have hits, you don't get recorded again. And they control distribution. We tried to change that with Apple but in the end we were defeated. They still control everything. EMI killed our album, *Two Virgins,* because they didn't like it. With the last record they've censored the words of the songs printed on the record sleeve. Fucking ridiculous and hypocritical—they have to let me sing it but they don't dare let you read it. Insanity.

R.B.: Though you reach fewer people now, perhaps the effect can be more concentrated.

John: Yes, I think that could be true. To begin with, working-class people reacted against our openness about sex. They are frightened of nudity, they're repressed in that way as well as others. Perhaps they thought, "Paul is a good lad, he doesn't make trouble." Also, when Yoko and I got married, we got terrible racialist letters—you know, warning me that she would slit my throat. Those mainly came from Army people living in Aldershot. Officers. Now workers are more friendly to us, so perhaps it's changing.

It seems to me that the students are now half-awake enough to try and wake up their brother workers. If you don't pass on your own awareness then it closes down again. That is why the basic need is for the students to get in with the workers and convince

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them that they are not talking gobbledegook. And of course it's difficult to know what workers are really thinking because the capitalist press always only quotes mouthpieces like Vic Feather anyway. So the only thing is to talk to them directly, especially the young workers. We've got to start with them because they know they're up against it. That's why I talk about school on the album. I'd like to incite people to break the framework, to be disobedient in school, to stick their tongues out, to insult authority.

R.B.: Communication is vital for building a movement, but in the end it's powerless unless you also develop popular force.

Yoko: I get very sad when I think about Vietnam where there seems to be no choice but violence. This violence goes on for centuries perpetuating itself. In the present age, when communication is so rapid, we should create a different tradition. Traditions are created every day. Five years now is like a hundred years before. We are living in a society that has no history. There's no precedent for it, so we can break the old patterns.

* * *

T.A.: No ruling class in the whole of history has given up power voluntarily and I don't see that changing.

Yoko: But violence isn't just a conceptual thing, you know. I saw a program about this kid who had come back from Vietnam—he'd lost his body from the waist down. He was just a lump of meat, and he said, "Well, I guess it was a good experience."

John: He didn't want to face the truth, he didn't want to think it had all been a waste. . . .

Yoko: But think of the violence, it could happen to your kids. . . .

R.B.: But Yoko, people who struggle against oppression find themselves attacked by those who have a vested interest in nothing changing, those who want to protect their power and wealth. Look at the people in Bogside and Falls Road in Northern Ireland; they were mercilessly attacked by the special police because they began demonstrating for their rights. On one night in August 1969 seven people were shot and thousands driven from their homes. Didn't they have a right to defend themselves?

Yoko: That's why one should try to tackle these problems before a situation like that happens.

John: Yes, but what do you do when it does happen, what do you do?

R.B.: Popular violence against their oppressors is always justified. It cannot be avoided.

Yoko: But in a way the new music showed things could be transformed by new channels of communication.

John: Yes, but as I said, nothing really changed.

Yoko: Well, something changed, and it was for the better. All I'm saying is that perhaps we can make a revolution without violence.

John: But you can't take power without a struggle. . . .

T.A.: That's the crucial thing.

John: Because when it comes to the nitty gritty they won't let the people have any power, they'll give all the rights to perform and to dance for them, but no real power.

Yoko: The thing is, even after the revolution, if people don't have any

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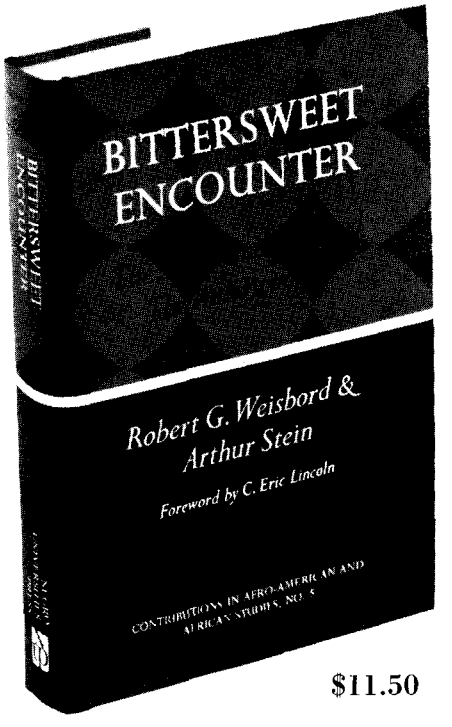

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trust in themselves, they'll get new problems.

John: After the revolution you have the problem of keeping things going, of sorting out all the different views. It's quite natural that revolutionaries should have different solutions, that they should split into different groups and then reform, that's the dialectic, isn't it—but at the same time they need to be united against the enemy, to solidify a new order. I don't know what the answer is; obviously Mao is aware of this problem and keeps the ball moving.

R.B.: The danger is that once a revolutionary state has been created, a new conservative bureaucracy tends to form around it. This danger tends to increase if the revolution is isolated by imperialism and there is material scarcity.

John: Once the new power has taken over they have to establish a new status quo just to keep the factories and trains running.

R.B.: Yes, but a repressive bureaucracy doesn't necessarily run the factories or trains any better than the workers could under a system of revolutionary democracy.

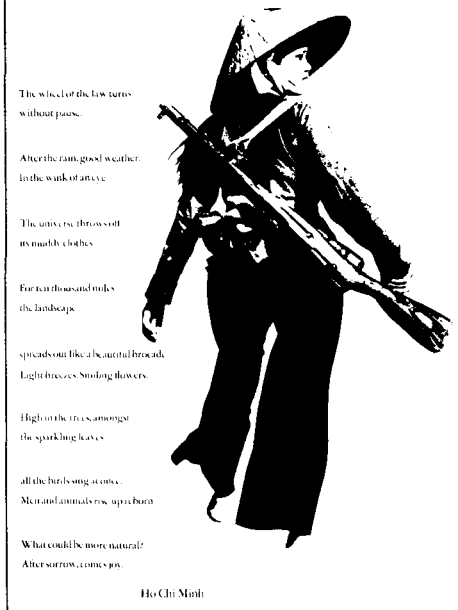
John: Yes, but we all have bourgeois instincts within us, we all get tired and feel the need to relax a bit. How do you keep everything going and keep up revolutionary fervor after you've achieved what you set out to achieve? Of course Mao has kept them up to it in China, but what happens after Mao goes? Also he uses a personality cult. Perhaps that's necessary; like I said, everybody seems to need a father figure. But I've been reading *Khrushchev Remembers*—I know he's a bit of a lad himself—but he seemed to think that making a religion out of an individual was bad—that doesn't seem to be part of the basic Communist idea. Still, people are people, that's the difficulty. If we took over Britain, then we'd have the job of cleaning up the bourgeoisie and keeping people in a revolutionary state of mind.

* * *

T.A.: A personality cult is totally alien to Marxism, which is about ideas. . . . Marx, Lenin and Trotsky were always against it and so was Mao to begin with but then he found it politically useful to use it to break the grip of the Liu Shao Chi group on the Party. I was in China briefly last year and it was obvious that the cult of Mao had got out of hand. Of course Mao is quite different from Stalin—Mao led a revolution, while Stalin betrayed one. But that doesn't mean that there aren't serious weaknesses in the Chinese revolution. During the cultural revolution some very interesting criticisms were developed by Red Guard groups in Shanghai and elsewhere—they insisted on discussing the real issues much more openly than they were being encouraged to. . . .

John: The cultural revolution seems to have been instigated by Mao himself, wasn't it? There was no national feeling, "Well, there are too many opportunists and too much apathy."

R.B.: Clearly the cultural revolution was a very bold step in spite of the limits set on it. Mao felt in a position to take it, partly because the popular participation in the Chinese revolution, built up over 20 years of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without pause.
After the rain, good weather.
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The universe throws off
its muddy clothes
For ten thousand miles
the landscape
spreads out like a beautiful brocade.
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the sparkling leaves
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people's war, was much deeper than it could be in Russia where the old order almost collapsed of itself under the tremendous strain of the First World War. Mao couldn't have instigated the masses against the Party bureaucracy unless he was confident of their support. But of course the decisive thing is to build popular power right into the heart of the new revolutionary state. In Britain, unless we can create a new popular power—and here that would basically mean workers' power—really controlled by, and answerable to, the masses, then we couldn't make the revolution.

Yoko: That's why it will be different when the younger generation takes over.

John: I think it wouldn't take much to get the youth here really going. You'd have to give them free rein to attack the local councils or to destroy the school authorities, like the students who break up the repression in the universities. It's already happening, though people have got to get together more. And the women are very important too, we can't have a revolution that doesn't involve and liberate women. It's so subtle the way you're taught male superiority. It took me quite a long time to realize that my maleness was cutting off certain areas for Yoko. She's a red hot liberationist and was quick to know how people who claim to be radical treat women.

R.B.: There's always been at least as much male chauvinism on the left as anywhere else—though the rise of women's liberation is helping to sort that out.

John: It's ridiculous. How can you talk about "power to the people" unless you realize the people is both sexes.

Yoko: You can't love someone unless you are in an equal position with them. A lot of women have to cling to men out of fear or insecurity, and that's not love—basically that's why women hate men . . .

John: . . . and vice versa. . . .

Yoko: So if you have a slave around the house, how can you expect to make a revolution outside it? The problem for women is that if we try to be free, then we naturally become lonely, because so many women are willing to become slaves, and men usually prefer that. So you always have to take the chance "Am I going to lose my man?" It's very sad.

John: Of course, Yoko was well into liberation before I met her. She'd had to fight her way through a man's world—the art world is completely dominated by men—so she was full of revolutionary zeal when we met. There was never any question about it: we had to have a 50-50 relationship or there was no relationship, I was quick to learn. She did an article about women in *Nova* more than two years back in which she said, "Woman is the nigger of the world."

* * *

T.A.: How do you think we can destroy the capitalist system here in Britain, John?

John: I think only by making the workers aware of the really unhappy position they are in, breaking the dream they are surrounded by. They think they are in a wonderful free-speaking country; they've got cars and tellies and they don't want to think there's anything more to life; they are prepared to let the bosses run them, to see their children fucked up in school. They're dreaming someone else's dream, it's not even their own. They should realize that the blacks and the Irish are being harassed and repressed and that they will be next. As soon as they start being aware of all that, we can really begin to do something. The workers can start to take over. Like Marx said, "To each according to his need"—I think that would work well here. But we'd also have to infiltrate the Army too, because they are well trained to kill us all. We've got to start all this from where we ourselves are oppressed. I think it's false, shallow, to be giving to others when your own need is great. The idea is not to comfort people, not to make them feel better, but to make them feel worse, to constantly put before them the degradations and humiliations they go through to get what they call a living wage.

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Robin Blackburn is an editor of Britain's New Left Review. *Tariq Ali is an editor of* The Red Mole.

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Letters:

[LOS SIETE]

EDITORS: I'd like to bring readers up to date on Los Siete de la Raza, the six young latinos who inspired a major political movement in San Francisco's Mission District *barrio*.

Immediately after their acquittal on charges of killing a San Francisco policeman, Los Siete were charged with an armed robbery allegedly committed when they were fleeing for their lives. Under California's "indeterminate sentence," the penalty for armed robbery is five years to life. It is under this sentence that such political prisoners as George Jackson have been kept in jail over ten years. If convicted, there was little chance Los Siete would be free again before they were old men. The police hated them too much.

This became clear after Los Siete were bailed out pending their second trial. The Police Officers Association furiously attacked the verdict; a police rally was held in protest; the judge was demoted to civil court; and the press used the cop's widow again, as it had 18 months before, to stir up race hatred against Los Siete and the whole class of brown street-people they had come to represent.

The organization of Los Siete, which since had grown far beyond a political defense committee, understood, as it said in a recent statement, that "when Los Siete were acquitted they were no longer individuals. They were the number one target of the San Francisco police, and therefore could no longer lead normal lives. The organization, realizing this, met with them, explaining the need for security and discipline. Tony and Mario Martinez became part of the leadership. The other four decided to take the path of four individuals, totally ignoring the fact they were political prisoners acquitted of killing a policeman."

The fact that the other four—Nelson, José, Bebe and Gary—preferred tripping to serious political work is understandable. But it led to serious consequences for them. About a month after the acquittal, Nelson and José were busted for dope. The police celebrated. Soon after, José was stopped by the Tactical Squad and beaten mercilessly; after three days in jail with no medical attention, all the important charges against him were dropped and he went directly to the hospital for surgery.

Then in late April, Bebe and Gary, after being tailed for several days, were caught in what police said was an attempted robbery of a liquor store. Gary was shot in the legs; then his bones were crushed with a rifle butt—the crippling is probably permanent. Bebe is back in jail facing several counts of armed robbery and attempted murder.

Los Siete, after a week of painful analysis, wrote: "It was through their individualism in placing their personal interests first and the interests of the people second that Gary and Bebe ended up trapped by the police. . . . They are representative of the brothers on the street; they are aware of who the enemy is and know all the revolutionary rhetoric. But they lack the discipline and determination to work to liberate the people. . . ."

Meanwhile, the other four had gone underground. "The essence of the liberation movement is the self-determination of all peoples," Tony and Mario said in a tape sent to Los Siete; "and as revolutionaries we feel it correct that we should determine our own destiny, so we can live another day to fight another day."

They added: "Brothers and sisters, after our victory in San Francisco our families had to put up their houses as part of the ransom that made it possible for us to walk the streets again. We are therefore making a mass appeal, and we are asking all of you—students, workers, professionals, brothers and sisters off the block, and movement people—to help by donations."

Los Siete has learned a great deal and come a long way since it began as a political defense committee for six brothers in May 1969. In a way, it was inevitable that the six "heroes" would have to be de-mythified: through no fault of their own, both the establishment press and Los Siete blew them up bigger than life.

Almost $30,000 is needed to save people like the Martinez family from losing their homes. Los Siete is asking everyone who has supported the movement in the past, and who supports La Raza's efforts toward self-determi-

KEEP THE SPIRIT OF LOS SIETE FREE

Six months after their acquittal on charges of killing a San Francisco cop, two of Los Siete de la Raza are back in jail and the other four have gone underground. All six were facing life in prison on new charges of armed robbery stemming from an incident six days after the cop's death, when Los Siete were fleeing for their lives, and police had orders to shoot them on sight. "As revolutionaries we should determine our own destiny," Tony and Mario Martinez said, "so we can live another day to fight another day."

Almost $30,000 is needed immediately so that families and friends of Los Siete will not lose their homes, which were put up as bail. Los Siete is making a mass appeal, and asking students, workers, professionals, movement brothers and sisters, to send what you can.

LOS SIETE DEFENSE FUND: P.O. BOX 40159, San Francisco 94140

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nation, to give what she or he can. The address is: P. O. Box 40159, San Francisco, California 94140.

MARJORIE HEINS
San Francisco, California

[CONSUMER GUERRILLAS]

EDITORS: Sharon Ashmore's letter which appeared in the March issue contained an idea you might well expand on. She suggested that we, as individuals, simply remove our business from the Bank of America and then go on to other institutions.

I and two others individually decided to cancel out on Ma Bell. I wrote to the phone company to explain that I would have to change my phone over to a 40-call unit because Bell was pushing for greater military expenditures by the government and because government war policy was cutting my real income 5 percent per year. A few months later I had the phone taken out altogether, explaining to Ma that I couldn't support her and the war on my limited income.

Doesn't sound like much but Ma Bell dropped $100-150 per year on me. My friends did the same when they heard of my action. That's about $500 less on Ma Bell's annual profit statement. If three of us did that, think what 100,000 people could do.

I'd suggest you set up a small (say half-column) space and start reporting what people are doing to bring down militarism. You might focus attention on Ma Bell (or another institution) for three or four issues. Just carry reports of what people are doing. The people are awfully damn imaginative and a little reporting will go a long way.

Practically anyone can do something to cut Ma Bell's profits: if you have two phones, order them to take one out; if you have "princess" phones, have them changed back to black phones; if you have push-button phones, have them removed for standard phones; if you have regular service, cut it back to 40-call; best of all, take out that goddamn wire-tapping facilitating equipment and tell them to shove it until we no longer have their "standing army" with its boots on our necks.

Use the phone where you work if you have to. Charge long-distance calls to the government (like people in the Pentagon do) or just don't bother to use the phone. You'll be surprised how little you really need the damn thing.

People are just waking up to the power they have as consumers. A little "Guerrilla Consumerism" might do wonders to straighten out a monopoly or two.

HAL DORLAND
Silver Spring, Maryland

[POLAROID POISONS]

EDITORS: The following ad appeared in a Canadian film magazine:

"Polaroid Film Can Be Lethal. The National Park Service estimates that as many as 400 moose, elk and deer have died in national recreation areas from eating the highly toxic scraps from cameras with self-developing films. Fish can also be affected in lakes and streams. Please warn your friends."

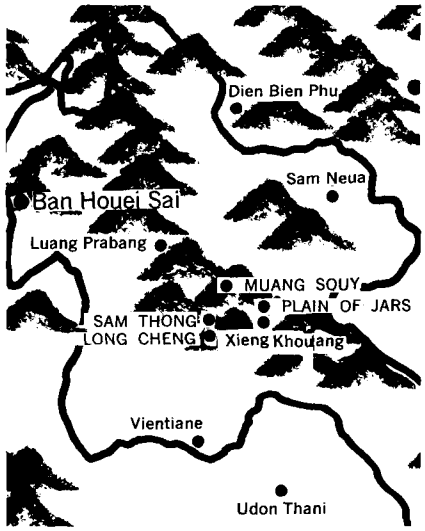
A CANADIAN READER

Apartheid and poisons—Polaroid really gets it on! Perhaps it might be better to issue the warning to them!

—THE EDITORS

(Correction:)

The map for the article "The New Opium War" (RAMPARTS, May 1971) contains several production errors. Below is a corrected map of Northern Laos. Also, on page 34, column two should read General Propas, not Propasx; and 300, not 30, KMT and Burmese dead.



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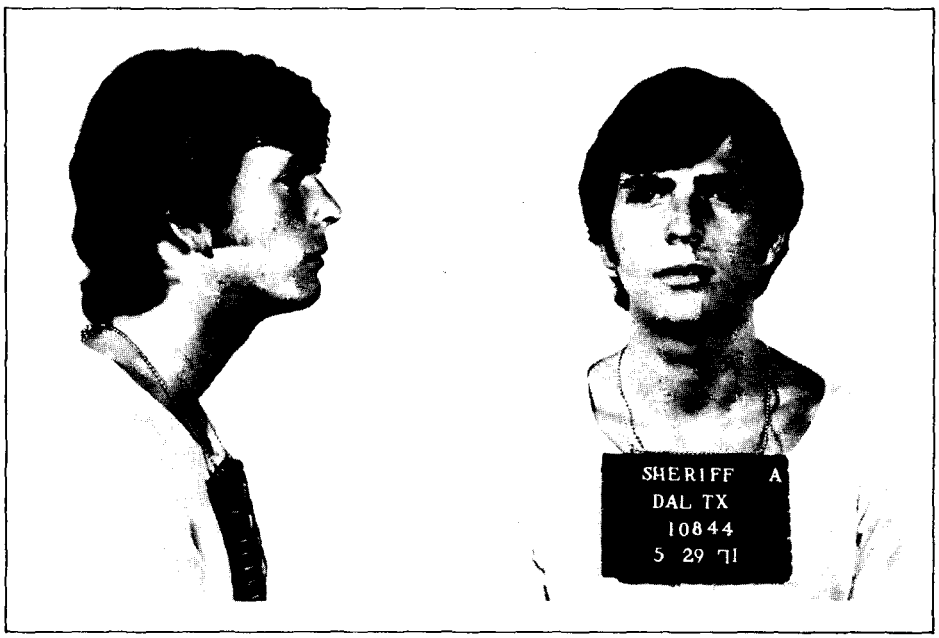

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Power to the people
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Power to the people right on

Say we want a revolution
We better get it on right away
Get on your feet
And into the street, singing . . .

Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people right on

A million workers working for nothing
You better give 'em what they really own
We gotta put you down
When we come into town, singing . . .

Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people right on

I gotta ask you comrades and brothers
How do you treat your own women back home
She got to be herself
So you can free yourself

Power to the people
Power to the people
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Power to the people right on

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